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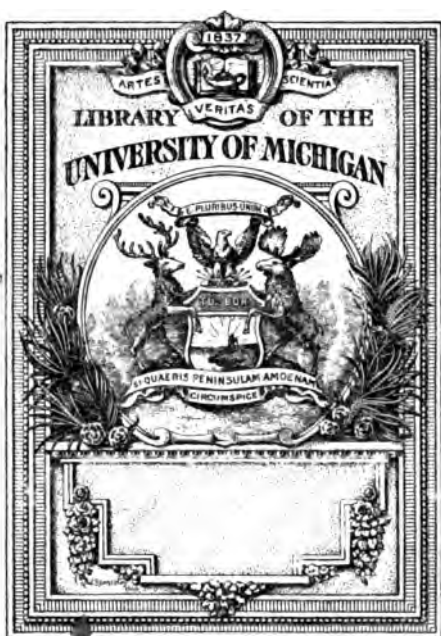
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(Exhibition at the Theodore Museum - 1924)

**THE POETRY OF
ROBERT BURNS**

**EDITED BY
WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY
AND
THOMAS F. HENDERSON**

VOLUME I

**POEMS PUBLISHED AT
KILMARNOCK 1786**

**ADDITIONAL POEMS
EDINBURGH
1787:1793**

**EDINBURGH
T. C. AND E. C. JACK
CAUSEWAYSIDE
1896**

EDINBURGH: T. AND A. CONSTABLE
PRINTERS TO HER MAJESTY

EDITORS' PREFACE

BURNS's verse falls naturally into two main divisions. One, and that the larger, appeals with persistency and force, on the strength of some broadly human qualities, to the world in general: for the reason that the world in general is rich in sentiment but lacks the literary sense. The other, being a notable and lasting contribution to literature, is the concern of comparatively few. The present Edition of Burns's verse is primarily addressed to the second of these two bodies of readers. Of necessity, however, it is as nearly complete as existing canons of taste will permit; and 'tis hoped that it will prosper, though for different reasons and on different grounds, with both sections of what, after all, is one, and that a world-wide, public.

A chief object with the Editors has been the preparation of a text as nearly classic as a systematic and, in so far as might be, an exhaus-

tive collation of authorities—books, proof-sheets, tracts, broadsides, periodicals, and mss.—could secure. They have spared no pains in its pursuit; and they have peculiar pleasure in denoting the spirit in which, on every hand, their appeal for assistance was received. It is for others to appreciate the result of their effort. Enough for them to say, that such authority as it may be found to have is largely due to the generous consideration extended to them from outside. They have noted the several facts of their indebtedness, as occasion offered, in their bibliographical introduction and in the body of their work. As regards this First Volume, it remains for them to express their gratitude to Dr. Garnett, C.B., of the British Museum, for that help no man of letters ever asks in vain; to Mr. Clark, of the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh; to Mr. Hugh A. Webster, of the University Library, Edinburgh; to Mr. Barrett, of the Mitchell Library, Glasgow; to Mr. James L. Caw, of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh; to Mr. Andrew Macdonald, Glasgow, for the use of a capital set of Ramsay chap-books; to Mr. R. T. Hamilton Bruce,

EDITORS' PREFACE vii

Edinburgh, for the use of a unique and precious copy of the garland known as *The Merry Muses of Caledonia* and the set of chap-books hereafter referred to as the Motherwell Collection; and to Mr. Walter Raleigh, Liverpool, and Mr. James Fitzmaurice-Kelly, London, for assistance in tracing the life of Burns's favourite stave from its beginnings in Provence to its earliest known appearance in Scots verse.

In the matter of notes and explanations, the Editors have done their best to restrict themselves to essentials, and to state their facts and theories as briefly as is consistent with exactness of effect. All the same, the sum of their commentary bulks formidably, to say the least; and the reason is not far to seek. Burns borrowed largely from his predecessors; he lived a hundred years ago; first and last he was what is called a local poet. Indeed, it is fair to say of him that he was the satirist and singer of a parish: so that even in his own time much of his verse, though it survives as verse of genius, was intelligible through all its niceties of meaning to his fellow-parishioners alone. In these days, therefore,

it has appeared the safer as well as the more serviceable course rather to err on the score of too much commentary than on that of not enough. 'Tis in much the same spirit that the Editors have compiled their Glossary. There are not a few Scots readers of Burns to whom that Glossary will seem full to excess. But the dialect he wrote is fading swiftly into the past (such curiosities of interpretation as 'broth' for 'broose,' as 'meal' for 'drammock,' are of late years not unknown); and it has seemed reasonable to assume that, to say nothing of most Englishmen, there are Scotsmen all the world over, who will not disclaim such help as is here afforded them, in the work of realising the full import of some words which, mayhap, they have forgotten, and of others which, mayhap, they never rightly knew.

For the annotations on certain staves and sources of inspiration, their purpose is to emphasise the theory that Burns, for all his exhibition of some modern tendencies, was not the founder of a dynasty but the heir to a flourishing tradition and the last of an ancient line: that he is demonstrably the outcome of an environment, and

not in any but the narrowest sense the unnatural birth of Poesy and Time which he is sometimes held to be. Being a great artist, he derives from a numerous ancestry; and, like all great artists, he is partly an effect of local and peculiar conditions and partly the product of immediate and remote forbears. Genius apart, in fact, he is *ultimus Scotorum*, the last expression of the old Scots world, and therewith the culmination of a school deep-rooted in the past, which, by producing such men as Dunbar and Scott and Alexander Montgomerie, as Ramsay and Fergusson and the nameless lyrists of the song-books, made it possible for him to be.

W. E. H.

T. F. H.

LONDON, January 1st, 1896.

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ERRATA

THE Editors regret to note the following Errata :—

- Page 41, line 3—*delete* comma after 'face' in text.
- " 94 " 22—*for* 'meerly' *read* 'merely' in margin.
- " 195 " 3—*delete* '[Notes]' in margin.
- " 212 " 14—*delete* 'broth' in margin.
- " 225 " 13—*for* 'cut' *read* 'hard' in margin.
- " 225 " 23—*for* 'omite' *read* 'vomited' in margin.

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*'Don't be afraid. I'll be more
respected a hundred years after
I am dead than I am at present.'*
R. B., July 1796.

P R E F A C E

(To the Original Edition, Kilmarnock, 1786)

THE following trifles are not the production of the Poet, who, with all the advantages of learned art, and perhaps amid the elegancies and idlenesses of upper life, looks down for a rural theme, with an eye to Theocrites or Virgil. To the Author of this, these and other celebrated names (their countrymen) are, in their original languages, 'a fountain shut up, and a book sealed.' Unacquainted with the necessary requisites for commencing Poet by rule, he sings the sentiments and manners he felt and saw in himself and his rustic compeers around him, in his and their native language. Though a Rhymers from his earliest years, at least from the earliest impulses of the softer passions, it was not till very lately that the applause, perhaps the partiality, of Friendship, wakened his vanity so far as to make him think anything of his was worth showing; and none of the following works were ever composed with a view to the press. To amuse himself with the little creations of his own fancy,

amid the toil and fatigues of a laborious life ; to transcribe the various feelings, the loves, the griefs, the hopes, the fears, in his own breast ; to find some kind of counterpoise to the struggles of a world, always an alien scene, a task uncouth to the poetical mind ; these were his motives for courting the Muses, and in these he found Poetry to be its own reward.

Now that he appears in the public character of an Author, he does it with fear and trembling. So dear is fame to the rhyming tribe, that even he, an obscure, nameless Bard, shrinks aghast at the thought of being branded as 'An impertinent blockhead, obtruding his nonsense on the world ; and because he can make a shift to jingle a few doggerel Scotch rhymes together, looks upon himself as a Poet of no small consequence forsooth.'

It is an observation of that celebrated Poet¹—whose divine Elegies do honour to our language, our nation, and our species—that 'Humility has depressed many a genius to a hermit, but never raised one to fame.' If any Critic catches at the word *genius*, the Author tells him, once for all, that he certainly looks upon himself as possess of some poetic abilities, otherwise his publishing in the manner he has done, would be a manœuvre below the worst character which, he hopes, his worst enemy will ever give him : but to the genius of a

¹ Shenstone.

Ramsay, or the glorious dawns of the poor, unfortunate Ferguson, he, with equal unaffected sincerity, declares that, even in his highest pulse of vanity, he has not the most distant pretensions. These two justly admired Scotch Poets he has often had in his eye in the following pieces; but rather with a view to kindle at their flame, than for servile imitation.

To his Subscribers the Author returns his most sincere thanks. Not the mercenary bow over a counter, but the heart-throbbing gratitude of the Bard, conscious how much he is indebted to Benevolence and Friendship for gratifying him, if he deserves it, in that dearest wish of every poetic bosom—to be distinguished. He begs his readers, particularly the Learned and the Polite, who may honour him with a perusal, that they will make every allowance for Education and Circumstances of Life: but if, after a fair, candid, and impartial criticism, he shall stand convicted of Dulness and Nonsense, let him be done by, as he would in that case do by others—let him be condemned without mercy, to contempt and oblivion.

DEDICATION

(*Edinburgh Edition, 1787*)

TO THE

NOBLEMEN AND GENTLEMEN OF THE CALEDONIAN HUNT

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—A Scottish Bard, proud of the name, and whose highest ambition is to sing in his Country's service—where shall he so properly look for patronage as to the illustrious Names of his native Land; those who bear the honours and inherit the virtues of their Ancestors? The Poetic Genius of my Country found me as the prophetic bard Elijah did Elisha—at the *plough*, and threw her inspiring mantle over me. She bade me sing the loves, the joys, the rural scenes and rural pleasures of my natal Soil, in my native tongue: I tuned my wild, artless notes, as she inspired. She whispered me to come to this ancient metropolis of Caledonia, and lay my Songs under your honoured protection: I now obey her dictates.

ORIGINAL DEDICATION 5

Though much indebted to your goodness, I do not approach you, my Lords and Gentlemen, in the usual style of dedication, to thank you for past favours; that path is so hackneyed by prostituted Learning, that honest Rusticity is ashamed of it. Nor do I present this Address with the venal soul of a servile Author, looking for a continuation of those favours: I was bred to the Plough, and am independent. I come to claim the common Scottish name with you, my illustrious Countrymen; and to tell the world that I glory in the title. I come to congratulate my Country, that the blood of her ancient heroes still runs uncontaminated; and that from your courage, knowledge, and public spirit, she may expect protection, wealth, and liberty. In the last place, I come to proffer my warmest wishes to the Great Fountain of Honour, the Monarch of the Universe, for your welfare and happiness.

When you go forth to waken the Echoes, in the ancient and favourite amusement of your Forefathers, may Pleasure ever be of your party; and may Social-joy await your return! When harassed in courts or camps with the jostlings of bad men and bad measures, may the honest consciousness of injured Worth attend your return to your native Seats; and may Domestic Happiness, with a smiling welcome, meet you at your gates! May Corruption shrink at your kindling, indignant

6 ORIGINAL DEDICATION

glance; and may tyranny in the Ruler and licentiousness in the People equally find you an inexorable foe!

I have the honour to be, with the sincerest gratitude and highest respect,

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

Your most devoted, humble Servant,

ROBERT BURNS.

Edinburgh, April 4, 1787.

POEMS

1

KILMARNOCK 1786

THE TWA DOGS

A Tale

'Twas in that place o' Scotland's isle
That bears the name of auld King Coil,
Upon a bonie day in June,
When wearing thro' the afternoon,
Twa dogs, that were na thrang at hame,
Forgathered ance upon a time.

[Notes]

busy

chance-met

The first I'll name, they ca'd him *Cæsar*,
Was keepit for 'his Honor's' pleasure :
His hair, his size, his mouth, his lugs,
Shew'd he was nane o' Scotland's dogs ;
But whalpit some place far abroad,
Where sailors gang to fish for cod.

cars

His lockèd, letter'd, braw brass collar
Shew'd him the gentleman an' scholar ;
But tho' he was o' high degree,
The fient a pride, nae pride had he ;
But wad hae spent an hour caressin,
Ev'n wi' a tinkler-gipsy's messin ;

send

mongrel

stikhy
matted cur ;
ragged
would have
stood
lanted

At kirk or market, mill or smiddie,
Nae tawted tyke, tho' e'er sae duddie,
But he wad stan't, as glad to see him,
An' stroan't on stanes an' hillocks wi' him.

rollicking ;
blade

The tither was a ploughman's collie,
A rhyming, ranting, raving billie,
Wha for his friend an' comrade had him,
And in his freaks had Luath ca'd him,
After some dog in Highland sang,
Was made lang syne—Lord knows how lang.

wise
ditch ;
stone fence
pleasant,
white-
streaked
every
shaggy

He was a gash an' faithfu' tyke,
As ever lap a sheugh or dyke.
His honest, sonsie, baws'nt face
Ay gat him friends in ilka place ;
His breast was white, his tousie back
Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black ;
His gawsie tail, wi' upward curl,
Hung owre his hurdies wi' a swirl.

joyous
buttocks

glad in
confidential
now
moles ; dug

Nae doubt but they were fain o' ither,
And unco pack an' thick thegither ;
Wi' social nose whyles snuff'd an' snowkit ;
Whyles mice an' moudieworts they howkit ;
Whyles scour'd awa' in lang excursion,
An' worry'd ither in diversion ;
Till tir'd at last wi' monie a farce,
They sat them down upon their arse,
An' there began a lang digression
About the 'lords o' the creation.'

CESAR

I've aften wonder'd, honest Luath,
 What sort o' life poor dogs like you have ;
 An' when the gentry's life I saw,
 What way poor bodies liv'd ava.

at all

Our laird gets in his rackèd rents,
 His coals, his kain, an' a' his stents :
 He rises when he likes himsel ;
 His flunkies answer at the bell ;
 He ca's his coach ; he ca's his horse ;
 He draws a bonie silken purse,
 As lang's my tail, whare, thro' the steeks,
 The yellow letter'd Geordie keeks.

rents in kind ;
duesstitches
guinea
peeps

Fræ morn to e'en it's nought but toiling,
 At baking, roasting, frying, boiling ;
 An' tho' the gentry first are stechin,
 Yet ev'n the ha' folk fill their pechan
 Wi' sauce, ragouts, an sic like traashtrie,
 That's little short o' downright wastrie :
 Our whipper-in, wee, blastit wonner,
 Poor, worthless elf, it eats a dinner,
 Better than onie tenant-man
 His Honor has in a' the lan' ;
 An' what poor cot-folk pit their painch in,
 I own it's past my comprehension.

cramming
servants ;
stomach

put ; paunch

LUATH

sometimes ;
bothered
digging
building
clearing

litter ;
brats
hands'
labour
thatch and
rope

Trowth, Cæsar, whyles they're fash't eneugh :
A cotter howkin in a sheugh,
Wi' dirty stanes biggin a dyke,
Baring a quarry, an' sic like ;
Himsel, a wife, he thus sustains,
A smytrie o' wee duddie weans,
An' nought but his han' darg to keep
Them right an' tight in thack an' rape.

small

stout lads ;
young
women

An' when they meet wi' sair disasters,
Like loss o' health or want o' masters,
Ye maist wad think, a wee touch langer,
An' they maum starve o' cauld and hunger :
But how it comes, I never kend yet,
They're maistly wonderfu' contented ;
An' buirdly chiels, an' clever hizzies,
Are bred in sic a way as this is.

CÆSAR

badger

But then to see how ye're negleckit,
How huff'd, an' cuff'd, an' disrespeckit !
Lord man, our gentry care as little
For delvers, ditchers, an' sic cattle ;
They gang as saucy by poor folk,
As I wad by a stinking brock.

THE TWA DOGS

13

I've notie'd, on our laird's court-day,	
(An' monie a time my heart's been wae),	sad
Poor tenant bodies, scant o' cash,	
How they maun thole a factor's snash :	endure ;
He'll stamp an' threaten, curse an' swear	abuse
He'll apprehend them, poind their gear ;	seize
While they maun staun', wi' aspect humble,	stand
An' hear it a', an' fear an' tremble !	

I see how folk live that hae riches ;
But surely poor-folk maun be wretches !

LUATH

They're nae sae wretched's ane wad think :	
Tho' constantly on poortith's brink,	poverty's
They're sae accustom'd wi' the sight,	
The view o't gies them little fright.	

Then chance an' fortune are sae guided,	
They're ay in less or mair provided ;	
An' tho' fatigu'd wi' close employment,	
A blink o' rest's a sweet enjoyment.	snatch

The dearest comfort o' their lives,	
Their grushie weans an' faithfu' wives ;	growing
The prattling things are just their pride,	
That sweetens a' their fire-side.	

sometimes ;
[Notes]

An' whyles twalpennie worth o' nappy
Can mak the bodies unco happy :
They lay aside their private cares,
To mind the Kirk and State affairs ;
They 'll talk o' patronage an' priests,
Wi' kindling fury i' their breasta,
Or tell what new taxation 's comin,
An' ferlie at the folk in Lon'on.

marvel

harvest-
homes

As bleak-fac'd Hallowmass returns,
They get the jovial, ranting kirns,
When rural life, of ev'ry station,
Unite in common recreation ;
Love blinks, Wit slaps, an' social Mirth
Forgets there 's Care upo' the earth.

glances

cream

smoking ;
snuff-box

conversing
cheerfully
romping

That merry day the year begins,
They bar the door on frosty win's ;
The nappy reeks wi' mantling ream,
An' sheds a heart-inspiring steam ;
The luntin pipe, an' sneeshin mill,
Are handed round wi' right guid will ;
The cantie auld folks crackin crouse,
The young anes ranting thro' the house—
My heart has been sae fain to see them,
That I for joy hao barkit wi' them.

too often

Still it 's owre true that ye hao said
Sic game is now owre aften play'd ;

THE TWA DOGS

15

There's monie a creditable stock	
O' decent, honest, fawsont folk,	well-doing
Are riven out baith root an' branch,	
Some rascal's pridefu' greed to quench,	
Wha thinks to knit himsel the faster	
In favor wi' some gentle master,	may be
Wha, aiblins thrang a parliamentin',	
For Britain's guid his saul indentin'—	indenturing

CÆSAR

Haith, lad, ye little ken about it :	
For Britain's guid ! guid faith ! I doubt it.	
Say rather, gaun as Premiers lead him :	going
An' saying aye or no 's they bid him :	
At operas an' plays parading,	
Mortgaging, gambling, masquerading :	
Or maybe, in a frolic daft,	
To Hague or Calais taks a waft,	
To mak a tour an' tak a whirl,	
To learn <i>bon ton</i> , an' see the worl'.	

There, at Vienna or Versailles,	
He rives his father's auld entails ;	splits
Or by Madrid he taks the rout,	road
To thrum guitars an' fecht wi' nowt ;	fight ; cattle
Or down Italian vista startles,	courses
Whore-hunting amang groves o' myrtles	

maddy Then bowses drumlie German-water,
 To mak himsel look fair an' fatter,
 An' clear the consequential sorrows,
 Love-gifts of Carnival signoras.

 For Britain's guid! for her destruction!
 Wi' dissipation, feud an' faction.

LUATH

way Hech man! dear sirs! is that the gate
 They waste sae monie a braw estate!
 troubled Are we sae foughten an' harass'd
 wealth to go For gear ta gang that gate at last?

 O would they stay aback frae courts,
 An' please themsels wi' countra sports,
 It wad for ev'ry ane be better,
 The laird, the tenant, an' the cotter!
 those ; For thae frank, rantin, ramblin billies,
 roistering Fient haet o' them's ill-hearted fellows:
 Not one Except for breakin o' their timmer,
 wasting their Or speakin lightly o' their limmer,
 woods Or shootin of a hare or moor-cock,
 mistress The ne'er-a-bit they're ill to poor folk.

 But will ye tell me, master Caesar:
 Sure great folk's life's a life o' pleasure?
 touch Nae could nor hunger e'er can steer them,
 The vera thought o't need na fear them.

CÆSAR

Lord, man, were ye but whyles whare I am,
The gentles, ye wad ne'er envý 'em !

It's true, they need na starve or sweat,
Thro' winter's cauld, or simmer's heat ;
They 've nae sair wark to craze their bances, *hard*
An' fill auld-age wi' grips an' granes : *gripes and*
But human bodies are sic fools, *groans*
For a' their colleges an' schools,
That when nae real ills perplex them,
They mak enow themsels to vex them ;
An' ay the less they hae to sturt them, *fret*
In like proportion, less will hurt them.

A countra fellow at the pleugh,
His acre's till'd, he's right eneugh ;
A countra girl at her wheel,
Her dizzen's done, she's unco weel ; *down*
But gentlemen, an' ladies warst,
Wi' ev'n down want o' wark are curst : *positive*
They loiter, lounging, lank an' lasy ;
Tho' deil-haet ails them, yet uneasy : *nothing*
Their days insipid, dull an' tasteless ;
Their nights unquiet, lang an' restless.

THE TWA DOGS

An' ev'n their sports, their balls an' races,
 Their galloping through public places,
 There 's sic parade, sic pomp an' art,
 The joy can scarcely reach the heart.

The men cast out in party-matches,
 Then sowther a' in deep debauches ;
 Ae night they 're mad wi' drink an' whoring,
 Niciest day their life is past enduring.

The ladies arm-in-arm in clusters,
 As great an' gracious a' as sisters ;
 But hear their absent thoughts o' ither,
 They 're a' run deils an' jads thegither.
 Whyles, owre the wee bit cup an' platie,
 They sip the scandal-potion pretty ;
 Or lee-lang nights, wi' crabbit leuks
 Pore owre the devil's pictur'd beuks ;
 Stake on a chance a farmer's stackyard,
 An' cheat like onie unhang'd blackguard.

There 's some exceptions, man an' woman ;
 But this is Gentry's life in common.

By this, the sun was out o' sight,
 An' darker gloamin brought the night ;

SCOTCH DRINK.

19

The bum-clock humm'd wi' lazy drone ;
 The kye stood rowtin i' the loan ;
 When up they gat, an' shook their lugs,
 Rejoic'd they were na *men*, but *dogs* ;
 An' each took aff his several way,
 Resolv'd to meet some ither day.

beetle
 cattle ;
 lowing ; field
 side path

SCOTCH DRINK

*Gie him strong drink until he wink,
 That's sinking in despair ;
 An' Aquor guid to fire his bluid,
 That's prest wi' grief an' care :
 There let him bouse, and deep carouse,
 Wi' bumpers flowing o'er,
 Till he forgets his loves or debts,
 An' minds his griefs no more.*

SOLOMON'S PROVERBS, xxxi. 6, 7.

I

LET other poets raise a fracas
 'Bout vines, an' wines, an' drucken Bacchus,
 An' crabbit names an' stories wrack us,
 An' grate our lug :
 I sing the juice Scotch bear can mak us,
 In glass or jug.

torment
 vex ; ear
 barley

II

winding ;
 frisk
 cream
 foam

O thou, my Muse ! guid auld Scotch drink !
 Whether thro' wimplin worms thou jink,
 Or, richly brown, ream owre the brink,
 In glorious faem,
 Inspire me, till I lisp an' wink,
 To sing thy name !

III

hollows
 oats; bearded

Let husky wheat the haughs adorn,
 An' aits set up their awnie horn,
 An' pease an' beans, at e'en or morn,
 Perfume the plain :
 Blessings on thee
 Leeze me on thee, John Barleycorn,
 Thou king o' grain !

IV

[Notes]; pick
 greens ;
 [Notes]

On thee aft Scotland chows her cood,
 In souple scones, the wale o' food !
 Or tumbling in the boiling flood
 Wi' kail an' beef ;
 But when thou pours thy strong heart's blood,
 There thou shines chief.

V

belly

Food fills the wame, an' keeps us livin ;
 Tho' life 's a gift no worth receivin,

SCOTCH DRINK

21

When heavy-dragg'd wi' pine an' grievin ;
 But oil'd by thee,
 The wheels o' life gae down-hill, scrievin, careering
 Wi' rattlin glee.

VI

Thou clears the head o' doited Lear, muddled
Learning
 Thou cheers the heart o' drooping Care ;
 Thou strings the nerves o' Labour sair,
 At's weary toil ;
 Thou ev'n brightens dark Despair
 Wi' gloomy smile.

VII

Aft, clad in massy siller weed, dress
 Wi' gentles thou erects thy head ;
 Yet, humbly kind in time o' need,
 The poor man's wine :
 His wee drap parritch, or his bread,
 Thou kitchens fine.

VIII

Thou art the life o' public haunts :
 But thee, what were our fairs and rants ?
 Ev'n godly meetings o' the saunts, Without ;
merry-
makings
 By thee inspir'd,
 When, gaping, they besiege the tents,
 Are doubly fir'd.

IX

smoking

[Notes]

whisky

tasty sugar

That merry night we get the corn in,
O sweetly, then, thou reams the horn in !
Or reekin on a New-Year mornin
In cog or bicker,
An' just a wee drap sp'ritual burn in,
An' gusty sucker !

x

GOAL

froth

twy-eared

cup

the Black.

smith

stroke

When Vulcan gies his bellows breath,
An' ploughmen gather wi' their graith,
O rare ! to see thee fizz an' freath
I' th' lugget caup !
Then Burnewin comes on like death
At ev'ry chaup.

XI

bony ; fellow

agvil

Nae mercy, then, for ain or steel :
The brawnie, bainie, ploughman chiel,
Brings hard owrehip, wi' sturdy wheel,
The strong forehammer,
Till block an' studdie ring an' reel,
Wi' dinsome clamour.

XII

squalling

babies

babble

cheerfully

When skirlin weanies see the light,
Thou maks the gossips clatter bright,

SCOTCH DRINK

23

How fumbling cuifs their dearies slight ;
 Wae worth the name !
 Nae howdie gets a social night,
 Or plack frae them.

dolts
 Woe befall
 midwife
 coin

XIII

When neebors anger at a plea,
 An' just as wud as wud can be,
 How easy can the barley-brie
 Cement the quarrel !
 It's aye the cheapest lawyer's fee,
 To taste the barrel.

law-case
 wild
 -brew

XIV

Alake ! that e'er my Muse has reason,
 To wyte her countrymen wi' treason !
 But monie daily weet their weason
 Wi' liquors nice,
 An' hardly, in a winter season,
 E'er spier her price.

charge
 weazan

 ask

XV

Wae worth that brandy, burnin trash !
 Fell source o' monie a pain an' brash !
 Twins monie a poor, doylt, drucken hash,
 O' half his days ;
 An' sends, beside, auld Scotland's cash
 To her warst faes.

illness
 robe ; stupid,
 drunken oaf

XVI

penniless Ye Scots, wha wish auld Scotland well !
 Ye chief, to you my tale I tell,
 becomes Poor, plackless devils like mysel !
 It sets you ill,
 meddle Wi' bitter, dearthfu' wines to mell,
 Or foreign gill.

XVII

bladder May gravels round his blather wrench,
 An' gouts torment him, inch by inch,
 phiz; growl Wha twists his grundle wi' a glunch
 O' sour disdain,
 Out owre a glass o' whisky-punch
 Wi' honest men !

XVIII

 O Whisky ! soul o' plays an' pranks !
 Accept a Bardie's gratefu' thanks !
 creakings When wanting thee, what tuneless cranks
 Are my poor verses !
 Thou comes—they rattle i' their ranks
 At ither's arses !

XIX

. Thee, Ferintosh ! O sadly lost !
 Scotland lament frae coast to coast !

Now colic grips, an' barkin hoast cough
 May kill us a' ;
For loyal Forbés' chartered boast
 Is taen awa !

XX

Thae curst horse-leeches o' th' Excise, Those
Wha mak the whisky stells their prize ! stills
Haud up thy han', Deil ! ance, twice, thrice !
 There, seize the blinkers ! spies
An' bake them up in brunstane pies
 For poor damn'd drinkers.

XXI

Fortune ! if thou'll but gie me still
Hale breeks, a scone, an' whisky gill, Whole
An' rowth o' rhyme to rave at will, breeches
 Tak a' the rest, store
An' deal't about as thy blind skill
 Directs thee best.

THE AUTHOR'S EARNEST CRY AND
PRAYER

TO THE SCOTCH REPRESENTATIVES IN THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS

*Dearest of distillation ! last and best——
——How art thou lost !——*

PARODY ON MILTON.

I

prudently

Ye Irish lords, ye knights an' squires,
Wha represent our brughs an' shires,
An' doucely manage our affairs
In Parliament,
To you a simple Bardie's prayers
Are humbly sent.

II

[Notes];
hoarse

Alas ! my roupet Muse is haerse !
Your Honors' hearts wi' grief 'twad pierce,

To see her sittin on her arse
 Low i' the dust,
 And scriechin out prosaic verse,
 An' like to brust!

III

Tell them wha hae the chief direction,
Scotland an' me's in great affliction,
E'er sin' they laid that curst restriction
On aqua-vitæ;
An' rouse them up to strong conviction,
An' move their pity.

IV

Stand forth, an' tell yon Premier youth
The honest, open, naked truth :
Tell him o' mine an' Scotland's drouth,
His servants humble :
The muckle deevil blaw you south,
If ye dissemble !

V

Does onie great man glunch an' gloom? growl
 Speak out, an' never fash your thumb! care a rap
 Let posts an' pensions sink or soom swim
 Wi' them wha grant 'em :
 If honestly they canna come,
 Far better want 'em.

28 THE AUTHOR'S EARNEST

VI

In gath'rin votes you were na slack ;
 Now stand as tightly by your tack :
 Ne'er claw your lug, an' fidge your back,
 An' hum an haw ;
 But raise your arm, an' tell your crack
 Before them a'.

scratch ;
wriggle

tale

VII

Paint Scotland greetin owre her thrissle ;
 Her mutchkin stowp as toom 's a whistle ;
 An' damn'd excisemen in a bustle,
 Seizin a stell,
 Triumphant, crushin 't like a mussel,
 Or lampit shell !

weeping ;
thistle
pint-pot ;
empty

still

limpet

VIII

Then, on the tither hand, present her—
 A blackguard smuggler right behind her,
 An' cheek-for-chow, a chuffie vintner
 Colleaguin join,
 Pickin her pouch as bare as winter
 Of a' kind coin.

cheek-by-
jowl ; fat-
faced

pocket

IX

Is there, that bears the name o' Scot,
 But feels his heart's bluid rising hot,

To see his poor auld mither's pot
 Thus dung in staves, broken in
 An' plunder'd o' her hindmost groat, pieces
 By gallows knaves?

X

Alas! I'm but a nameless wight,
 Trode i' the mire out o' sight!
 But could I like Montgomeries nght,
 Or gab like Boswell, speak
 There's some sark-necks I wad draw tight, shirt-
 An' tie some hose well.

XI

God bless your Honors! can ye see't,
 The kind, auld, cantie carlin greet, jolly matron
 An' no get warmly to your feet, weep
 An' gar them hear it, make
 An' tell them wi' a patriot-heat,
 Ye winna bear it?

XII

Some o' you nicely ken the laws,
 To round the period an' pause,
 An' with rhetoric clause on clause
 To mak harangues:
 Then echo thro' Saint Stephen's wa's
 Auld Scotland's wrangs.

XIII

oath-
smooth-
tongued

shrewd

Dempster, a true blue Scot I 'se warran ;
Thee, aith-detesting, chaste Kilkerran ;
An' that glib-gabbet Highland baron,
The Laird o' Graham ;
An' ane, a chap that 's damn'd auldfarran,
Dundas his name :

XIV

sprightly
fellow

Erakine, a spunkie Norland billie ;
True Campbells, Frederick and Ilay ;
An' Livistone, the bauld Sir Willie ;
An' monie ithers,
Whom auld Demosthenes or Tully
Might own for brithers.

XV

(Notes)

Thee sodger Hugh, my watchman stented,
If Bardies e'er are represented ;
I ken if that your sword were wanted,
Ye'd lend your hand ;
But when there 's ought to say aient it,
Ye're at a stand.

XVI

Arouse, my boys ! exert your mettle,
To get auld Scotland back her kettle ;

Or faith ! I 'll wad my new pleugh-pettle,	bet ; plough-staff
Ye 'll see 't or lang,	
She 'll teach you, wi' a reekin whittle,	smoking knife
Anither sang.	

XVII

This while she 's been in crankous mood,	fretful
Her lost Militia fir'd her bluid ;	
(Deil na they never mair do guid,	
Play'd her that pliskie !)	trick
An' now she 's like to rin red-wud	stark-mad
About her whisky.	

XVIII

An' Lord ! if ance they pit her till 't,	put her to 't
Her tartan petticoat she 'll kilt,	tuck up
An' durk an' pistol at her belt,	
She 'll tak the streets,	
An' rin her whittle to the hilt,	
I' the first she meets !	

XIX

For God-sake, sirs ! then speak her fair,	
An' straik her cannie wi' the hair,	stroke ; gently
An' to the Muckle House repair,	the Commons
Wi' instant speed,	
An' strive, wi' a' your wit an' lear,	learning
To get remead.	redress

32 THE AUTHOR'S EARNEST

XX

hot
scare the
varlet

Yon ill-tongu'd tinkler, Charlie Fox,
May taunt you wi' his jeers an' mocks ;
But gie him 't het, my hearty cocks !
E'en cove the cadie !
An' send him to his dicing box
An' sportin lady.

XXI

mixed-meal
bannocks

windows

Tell yon guid bluid of auld Boconnock's,
I'll be his debt twa mashlum bonnocks,
An' drink his health in auld Nanse Tinnock's
Nine times a-week,
If he some scheme, like tea an' winnocks,
Wad kindly seek.

XXII

Could he some commutation broach,
I'll pledge my aith in guid braid Scotch,
He needna fear their foul reproach
Nor erudition,
Yon mixtie-maxtie, queer hotch-potch,
The Coalition.

XXIII

bitter
cudgel

Auld Scotland has a raucle tongue ;
She's just a devil wi' a rung ;

An' if she promise auld or young
 To tak their part,
 Tho' by the neck she should be strung,
 She'll no desert.

XXIV

And now, ye chosen Five-and-Forty,
 May still your mither's heart support ye ;
 Then, tho' a minister grow dorty, pettrish
 An' kick your place,
 Ye'll snap your fingers, poor an' hearty,
 Before his face.

XXV

God bless your Honors, a' your days,
 Wi' sowps o' kail and brats o' claes, sups ; broth ;
scrape ;
clothes ;
jack-daws
 In spite o' a' the thievish kaes,
 That haunt St. Jamie's !
 Your humble Bardie sings an' prays,
 While Rab his name is.

POSTSCRIPT

XXVI

Let half-starv'd slaves in warmer skies
 See future wines, rich-clust'ring, rise ;

34 THE AUTHOR'S EARNEST

Their lot auld Scotland ne'er envies,
But, blythe and frisky,
She eyes her freeborn, martial boys
Tak aff their whisky.

XXVII

What tho' their Phœbus kinder warms,
While fragrance blooms and Beauty charms,
When wretches range, in famish'd swarms,
The scented groves ;
Or, hounded forth, dishonor arms
In hungry droves !

XXVIII

cannot
doubt
crack ;
pell-mell

Their gun's a burden on their shoulder ;
They downa bide the stink o' powther ;
Their bauldest thought's a hank'ring swither
To stan' or rin,
Till skelp—a shot—they're aff, a' throw'ther,
To save their skin.

XXIX

Put in his
mouth

But bring a Scotsman frac his hill,
Clap in his cheek a Highland gill,
Say, such is royal George's will,
An' there's the foe !
He has nae thought but how to kill
Twa at a blow.

XXX

Nae cauld, faint-hearted doubtings tease him ;
 Death comes, wi' fearless eye he sees him ;
 Wi' bluidy han' a welcome gies him ;
 An' when he fa's,
 His latest draught o' breathin lea'es him
 In faint huzzas.

XXXI

Sages their solemn een may steek	eyes ; shut
An' raise a philosophic reek,	smoke
An' physically causes seek	
In clime an' season ;	
But tell me whisky's name in Greek :	
I'll tell the reason.	

XXXII

Scotland, my auld, respected mither !	
Tho' whiles ye moistify your leather,	sometimes
Till whare ye sit on craps o' heather	heather-tops
Ye tine your dam,	lose ; water
Freedom and whisky gang thegither,	
Tak aff your dram !	

THE HOLY FAIR

*A robe of seeming truth and trust
 Hid crafty observation ;
 And secret hung, with poison'd crust,
 The dirk of defamation :
 A mask that like the gorget show'd,
 Dye-varying on the pigeon ;
 And for a mantle large and broad,
 He wrapt him in Religion.*

HYPOCRISY A-LA-MODE.

I

cool

glancing
 hopping
 furrows
 larks

UPON a simmer Sunday morn,
 When Nature's face is fair,
 I walkèd forth to view the corn,
 An' snuff the caller air.
 The rising sun, owre Galston Muirs,
 Wi' glorious light was glintin ;
 The hares were hirplin down the furs,
 The lav'rocks they were chantin
 Fu' sweet that day.

II

gazed

young
 women
 spanking

As lightsomely I glowr'd abroad,
 To see a scene sae gay,
 Three hizzies, early at the road,
 Cam skelpin up the way.

THE HOLY FAIR

37

Twa had manteeles o' dolefu' black,
 But ane wi' lyart lining ;
 The third, that gaed a wee a-back,
 Was in the fashion shining
 Fu' gay that day.

grey
 walked a bit
 behind

III

The twa appear'd like sisters twin,
 In feature, form, an' claes ;
 Their visage wither'd, lang an' thin,
 An' sour as onie slaes :
 The third cam up, hap-step-an'-lowp,
 As light as onie lambie,
 An' wi' a curchie low did stoop,
 As soon as e'er she saw me,
 Fu' kind that day.

clothes

hop ; jump

curtsey

IV

Wi' bonnet aff, quoth I, 'Sweet lass,
 I think ye seem to ken me ;
 I'm sure I've seen that bonie face,
 But yet I canna name ye.'
 Quo' she, an' laughin as she spak,
 An' taks me by the han's,
 'Ye, for my sake, hae gi'en the feck
 Of a' the Ten Comman's
 A screed some day.

bulk

rip

V

going
larking
wrinkled

' My name is Fun—your cronie dear,
The nearest friend ye hae ;
An' this is Superstition here,
An' that 's Hypocrisy.
I'm gaun to Mauchline Holy Fair,
To spend an hour in daffin :
Gin ye 'll go there, yon runkl'd pair,
We will get famous laughin
At them this day.'

VI

shirt

we'll
went ;
porridge-

Quoth I, ' Wi' a' my heart, I'll do't ;
I'll get my Sunday's sark on,
An' meet you on the holy spot ;
Faith, we 'se hae fine remarkin !'
Then I gaed hame at crowdie-time,
An' soon I made me ready ;
For roads were clad, frae side to side,
Wi' monie a wearie body,
In droves that day.

VII

self-com-
placent ; gear
jogging
strapping
youngsters

Here farmers gash, in ridin graith,
Gaed hoddin by their cotters ;
There swankies young, in braw braid-claith,
Are springin owre the gutters.

THE HOLY FAIR

39

The lasses, skelpin barefit, thrang,	padding ; thronging
In silks an' scarlets glitter ;	
Wi' sweet-milk cheese, in monie a whang,	shive
An' farls, bak'd wi' butter,	small cakes
Fu' crump that day.	crisp

VIII

When by the plate we set our nose,	
Weel heaped up wi' ha'pence,	
A greedy glowr black-bonnet throws,	the Elder
An' we maun draw our tippence.	
Then in we go to see the show :	
On ev'ry side they're gath'rin ;	
Some carryin dails, some chairs an' stools,	planks
An' some are busy bleth'rin	gabbling
Right loud that day.	

IX

Here stands a shed to fend the show'rs,	keep off
An' screen our countra gentry ;	
There Racer Jess, an' twa-three whores,	two or three
Are blinkin at the entry.	leering
Here sits a raw o' tittlin jads,	whispering jades
Wi' heavin breasts an' bare neck ;	
An' there a batch o' wabster lads,	weaver
Blackguardin frae Kilmarnock,	
For fun this day.	

X

Here some are thinkin on their sins,
 An' some upo' their claes;
 solled Ane curses feet that fyl'd his shins,
 Anither sighs an' prays :
 sample On this hand sits a chosen swatch,
 Wi' screw'd-up, grace-proud faces ;
 On that a set o' chaps, at watch,
 Busy Thrang winkin on the lasses
 To chairs that day.

XI

O happy is that man an' blest !
 Nae wonder that it pride him !
 Whase ain dear lass, that he likes best,
 Comes clinkin down beside him !
 Wi' arm repos'd on the chair back,
 He sweetly does compose him ;
 Which, by degrees, slips round her neck,
 And his palm An 's loof upon her bosom,
 Unkend that day.

XII

Now a' the congregation o'er
 Is silent expectation ;
 climbs For Moodie speels the holy door,
 Wi' tidings o' damnation :

THE HOLY FAIR

41

Should Hornie, as in ancient days, the Devil
 'Mang sons o' God present him ;
The vera sight o' Moodie's face,
 To 's ain het hame had sent him hot
 Wi' fright that day.

XIII

Hear how he clears the points o' Faith
 Wi' rattlin and thumpin !
Now meekly calm, now wild in wrath,
 He 's stampin, an' he 's jumpin !
His lengthen'd chin, his turn'd-up snout,
 His eldritch squeel an' gestures, unearthly
O how they fire the heart devout—
 Like cantharidian plaisters
 On sic a day .

XIV

But hark ! the tent has chang'd its voice ;
 There 's peace an' rest nae langer ;
For a' the real judges rise,
 They canna sit for anger :
Smith opens out his cauld harangues,
 On practice and on morals ;
An' aff the godly pour in thrangs,
 To gie the jars an' barrels
 A lift that day.

xv

What signifies his barren shine,
 Of moral pow'rs an' reason?
 His English style, an' gesture fine
 Are a' clean out o' season.
 Like Socrates or Antonine,
 Or some auld pagan heathen,
 The moral man he does define,
 But ne'er a word o' faith in
 That's right that day.

xvi

river's mouth

In guid time comes an antidote
 Against sic poison'd nostrum;
 For Peebles, frae the water-fit,
 Ascends the holy rostrum:
 See, up he's got the word o' God,
 An' meek an' mim has view'd it,
 While Common-sense has taen the road,
 An' aff, an' up the Cowgate
 Fast, fast that day.

xvii

next
 recites by
 rote

Wee Miller niest, the guard relieves,
 An' orthodoxy raibles,
 Tho' in his heart he weel believes,
 An' thinks it auld wives' fables:

THE HOLY FAIR

43

But faith ! the birkie wants a manse :	fellow ; living
So, cannilie he hums them ;	humbags
Altho' his carnal wit an' sense	
Like haffins-wise o'ercomes him	Nearly half
At times that day.	

XVIII

Now butt an' ben the change-house fills,	[Notes]
Wi' yill-caup commentators ;	tavern
Here's crying out for bakes an' gills,	ale-cup
An' there the pint-stowp clatters ;	biscuits
While thick an' thrang, an' loud an' lang,	
Wi' logic an' wi' Scripture,	
They raise a din, that in the end	
Is like to breed a rupture	
O' wrath that day.	

XIX

Leese me on drink ! it gies us mair	Blessings
Than either school or college ;	
It kindles wit, it waukens lear,	learning
It pangs us fou o' knowledge :	crams
Be't whisky-gill or penny wheep,	small beer
Or onie stronger potion,	
It never fails, on drinkin deep,	
To kittle up our notion,	tickle
By night or day.	

XX

The lads an' lassies, blythely bent
 To mind baith soul an' body,
 Sit round the table, weel content,
 An' steer about the toddy :
 On this ane's dress, an' that ane's leuk,
 They're makin observations ;
 While some are comin i' the meuk,
 An' fermin amignations
 To meet some day.

XXI

But now the Lord's ain trumpet touts,
 Till a' the hills are rairin,
 And echoes back return the shouts ;
 Black Russell is na spairin :
 His piercin words, like Highlan' swords,
 Divide the joints an' marrow ;
 His talk o' Hell, whare devils dwell,
 Our verra 'sauls does harrow'
 Wi' fright that day !

XXII

A vast, unbottom'd, boundless pit,
 Fill'd fou o' lowin brunstane,
 Whare ragin flame, an' scorchin heat,
 Wad melt the hardest whun-stane !

THE HOLY FAIR

45

The half-asleep start up wi' fear,
 An' think they hear it roarin;
 When presently it does appear,
 'Twas but some neebor snorin
 Asleep that day.

XXIII

'Twad be owre lang a tale to tell,	
How monie stories past;	
An' how they crowded to the yill,	
When they were a' dismiss;	
How drink gaed round, in cogs an' caups,	[Notes]
Amang the furms an' benches;	
An' cheese an' bread, frae women's laps,	
Was dealt about in lunches,	full portions
An' dawds that day.	lumps

XXIV

In comes a gawsie, gash guidwife,	jolly
An' sits down by the fire,	
Syne draws her kebbuck an' her knife;	Then; cheese
The lasses they are shyer:	
The auld guidmen, about the grace,	
Frae side to side they bother;	
Till some ane by his bonnet lays,	
An' gies them 't, like a tether,	rope
Fu' lang that day.	

XXV

Alas ! Wacsucks ! for him that gets nae lass,
 Or lasses that hae naething !
 Sma' need has he to say a grace,
 meal-dust Or melvie his braw claitthing !
 O wives, be mindfu', ance yoursel,
 How bonie lads ye wanted ;
 An' dinna for a kebbuck-heel
 Let lasses be affronted
 On sic a day !

XXVI

the bell- Now Clinkumbell, wi' rattlin tow,
 ringer ; rope
 swing and
 toll
 can Begins to jow an' croon ;
 Some swagger hame the best they dow,
 Some wait the afternoon.
 openings ; At slaps the billies halt a blink,
 fellows ; bit
 take off Till lasses strip their shoon :
 Wi' faith an' hope, an' love an' drink,
 They're a' in famous tune
 talk For crack that day.

XXVII

 How monie hearts this day converts
 O' sinners and o' lasses !
 by nightfall ; Their hearts o' stane, gin night, are gane
 gone As saft as onie flesh is :

There's some are fou o' love divine ;
 There's some are fou o' brandy ;
 An' monie jobs that day begin,
 May end in houghmagandie fornication
 Some ither day.

*O Prince! O Chief of many thronèd pow'rs!
That led th' embattl'd seraphim to war.*
MILTON.

I

O THOU! whatever tittle suit thee—	
Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie—	Hoofie
Wha in yon cavern grim an' sootie,	
Clos'd under hatches,	
Spairges about the brunstane cootie,	Splashes; dish
To scaud poor wretches!	scald

II

Hear me, Auld Hangie, for a wee,	Hangman
An' let poor damnèd bodies be ;	
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,	
Ev'n to a deil,	
To skelp an' scaud poor dogs like me	spank
An' hear us squeel.	

III

flaming
hollow

backward
bashful ;
afraid

Great is thy pow'r an' great thy fame ;
Far kend an' noted is thy name ;
An' tho' yon lowin heugh 's thy hame,
Thou travels far ;
An' faith ! thou 's neither lag, nor lame,
Nor blate, nor scour.

IV

Now

Stripping

Whyles, ranging like a roarin lion,
For prey, a' holes an' corners trying ;
Whyles, on the strong-wing'd tempest flyin,
Tirlin the kirks ;
Whyles, in the human bosom pryin,
Unseen thou lurks.

V

I've heard my rev'rend graunie say,
In lanely glens ye like to stray ;
Or, where auld ruin'd castles grey
Nod to the moon,
Ye fright the nightly wand'rer's way
Wi' eldritch croon.

VI

sedate

When twilight did my graunie summon,
To say her pray'rs, douce, honest woman !

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL 49

Aft yont the dyke she's heard you bummin,	beyond
Wi' eerie drone ;	
Or, rustlin, thro' the boortrees comin,	alders
Wi' heavy groan.	

VII

Ae dreary, windy, winter night,	
The stars shot down wi' sklentín light,	squinting
Wi' you mysel, I gat a fright :	
Ayont the lough,	pond
Ye, like a rash-buss, stood in sight,	clump of rushes
Wi' waving sugh.	moan

VIII

The cudgel in my nieve did shake,	fist
Each bristl'd hair stood like a stake ;	
When wi' an eldritch, stoor ' quaick, quaick, '	harsh
Amang the springs,	
Awa ye squatter'd like a drake,	
On whistling wings.	

IX

Let warlocks grim, an' wither'd hags,	
Tell how wi' you, on ragweed nags,	ragwort
They skim the muirs an' dizzy crags,	
Wi' wicked speed ;	
And in kirk-yards renew their leagues,	
Owre howkit dead.	disburied [Notes]

X

Thence, countra wives, wi' toil an' pain,
 May plunge an' plunge the kirk in vain;
 For O! the yellow treasure's taen
 By witching skill;
 An' dawtit, twal-pint hawkie's gaen
 As yell's the bill.

churn

 petted,
 twelve-pint
 cow; gone
 dry as; ball

XI

Thence, mystic knots mak great abuse
 On young guidmen, fond, keen an' croose;
 When the best wark-lume i' the house,
 By cantraip wit,
 Is instant made no worth a louse,
 Just at the bit.

husbands;
 confident or
 cocksure
 tool
 magic

nick of time

XII

When throwes dissolve the snawy hoord,
 An' float the jinglin icy boord,
 Then, water-kelpies haunt the foord,
 By your direction,
 An' nighted trav'lers are allur'd
 To their destruction.

hoard
 surface

XIII

And aft your moss-traversing spunkies
 Decoy the wight that late an' drunk is:

bog; jack-o'-
 lanterns

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL 51

The bleezin, curst, mischievous monkies
 Delude his eyes,
 Till in some miry slough he sunk is,
 Ne'er mair to rise.

XIV

When Masons' mystic word an' grip
 In storms an' tempests raise you up,
 Some cock or cat your rage maun stop, must
 Or, strange to tell!
 The youngest brother ye wad whip
 Aff straught to hell. straight

XV

Lang syne in Eden's bonie yard, garden
 When youthfu' lovers first were pair'd,
 An' all the soul of love they shar'd,
 The raptur'd hour,
 Sweet on the fragrant flow'ry swaird,
 In shady bow'r:

XVI

Then you, ye auld, snick-drawing dog! scheming
 Ye cam to Paradise incog,
 An' play'd on man a cursed brogue trick
 (Black be your fa'!),
 An' gied the infant warld a shog, shake
 'Maist ruin'd a'.

XVII

flurry smoky; scorched wig smutty	D' ye mind that day when in a bizz Wi' reekit duds, an' reestit gizz, Ye did present your smoutie phiz 'Mang better folk ;
squinted	An' sklented on the man of Uzz Your spitefu' joke ?

XVIII

loosed ; scold of all	An' how ye gat him i' your thrall, An' brak him out o' house an' hal', While scabs an' botches did him gall, Wi' bitter claw ; An' lows'd his ill-tongu'd wicked scaul— Was warst ava ?
--------------------------	--

XIX

fighting	But a' your doings to rehearse, Your wily snares an' fechtin fierce, Sin' that day Michael did you pierce Down to this time, Wad ding a Lallan tongue, or Erse, In prose or rhyme.
beat ; Low- land	

XX

Hoofs roistering	An' now, Auld Cloots, I ken ye're thinkin, A certain Bardie's rantin, drinkin,
---------------------	---

POOR MAILIE

53

Some luckless hour will send him linkin,	hurrying
To your black Pit ;	
But, faith ! he 'll turn a corner jinkin,	dodging
An' cheat you yet.	

XXI

But fare-you-weel, Auld Nickie-Ben !	.
O, wad ye tak a thought an' men' !	
Ye aiblins might—I dinna ken—	perhaps
Still hae a stake :	
I'm wae to think upo' yon den,	sad
Ev'n for your sake !	

THE DEATH AND DYING WORDS OF POOR MAILIE,

Mollie

THE AUTHOR'S ONLY PET YOWE : AN UNCO MOURNFU' TALE

As Mailie, an' her lambs thegither,	together
Was ae day nibblin on the tether,	one
Upon her cloot she coost a hitch,	hoof; looped
An' owre she warsl'd in the ditch :	floundered
There, groanin, dying, she did lie,	
When Hughoe he cam doytin by.	doddering

34 THE DEATH AND DYING

sing Wi' glowerin' een, an' lifted han's
 Fear Hughees like a statue stan's;
 He saw her days were near-hand ended.
 was But, wae's my heart! he could na' read it!
 He gaped wide, but naething spak.
 At length poor Maibie silence brak:—

 'O thou, whose lamentable face
 Appears to mourn my weef's case!
 My dying words attentive hear,
 An' hear them to my Master dear.

was 'Tell him, if e'er again he keep
 much more As wackie gear as hert a sheep—
 O, bid him never see them mair,
 was Wi' wicked strings o' hemp or hair
 But ca' them out to pack or hie,
 An' let them wander at their will:
 So may his flock increase, an' grow
 To scores o' lands, an' parks o' wae

 'Tell him, he was a Master kin,
 An' ay was guid to me an' mine;
 An' now my dying charge I gae him,
 My bairns an' lands, I trust them wi' him.

was 'O, bid him save their barrenness due,
 Five days, an' nae, an' bairns an' wee!

WORDS OF POOR MAILIE 55

But gie them guid cow-milk their fill,	
Till they be fit to fend themsel ;	look after
An' tent them duly, e'en an' morn,	tend
Wi' teats o' hay an' rippis o' corn.	small quan- tities ; handfuls

' An' may they never learn the gaets,	ways
Of ither vile, wanrestfu' pets—	restless
To slink thro' slaps, an' reave an' steal,	breaches
At stacks o' pease, or stocks o' kail !	plants
So may they, like their great forbears,	ancestors
For monie a year come thro' the sheers :	
So wives will gie them bits o' bread,	
An' bairns greet for them when they're dead.	weep

' My poor toop-lamb, my son an' heir,	tup
O, bid him breed him up wi' care !	
An' if he live to be a beast,	
To pit some havins in his breast !	conduct
An' warn him—what I winna name—	will not
To stay content wi' yowes at hame ;	ewes
An' no to rin an' wear his cloots,	
Like other menseless, graceless brutes.	unmannerly

' An' niest, my yowie, silly thing ;	eweikin ; helpless
Gude keep thee frae a tether string !	
O, may thou ne'er forgather up,	make friends
Wi' onie blastit, moorland toop ;	
But ay keep mind to moop an' mell,	nibble ; meddle
Wi' sheep o' credit like thysel !	

56 POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY

'And now, my bairns, wi' my last breath,
I lea'e my blessin wi' you baith :
An' when you think upo' your mither,
Mind to be kind to ane anither.

bladder

'Now, honest Hughoc, dinna fail,
To tell my master a' my tale ;
An' bid him burn this cursed tether,
An' for thy pains thou 'se get my blether.'

eyes

This said, poor Mailie turn'd her head,
An' clos'd her een amang the dead !

POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY

I

remedy

LAMENT in rhyme, lament in prose,
Wi' sant tears tricklin down your nose ;
Our Bardie's fate is at a close,
Past a' remead !
The last, sad cape-stane of his woes ;
Poor Mailie's dead !

II

worldly pelf

It's no the loss of warl's gear,
That could sae bitter draw the tear,

POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY 57

Or mak our Bardie, dowie, wear	drooping
The mourning weed :	
He's lost a friend an' neebor dear	
In Mailie dead.	

III

Thro' a' the toun she trotted by him ;	farm
A lang half-mile she could descry him ;	
Wi' kindly bleat, when she did spy him,	
She ran wi' speed :	
A friend mair faithfu' ne'er cam nigh him,	
Than Mailie dead.	

IV

I wat she was a 'sheep o' sense,	wot
An' could behave hersel wi' mense :	tact
I'll say 't, she never brak a fence,	
Thro' thievish greed.	
Our Bardie, lanely, keeps the spence	parlour
Sin' Mailie's dead.	

V

Or, if he wanders up the howe,	glen
Her livin image in her yowe	
Comes bleatin till him, owre the knowe,	knoll
For bits o' bread ;	
An' down the briny pearls rowe	roll
For Mailie dead.	

VI

issue ; tups	She was nae get o' moorlan tips,
matted fleece ;	Wi' tawted ket, an' hairy hips ;
rumps	For her forbears were brought in ships,
ancestor	Frac 'yont the Tweed :
	A bonier fleesh ne'er cross'd the clips
fleece ; shears	Than Mailie's dead.

VII

Woe befall	Wae worth the man wha first did shape
dangerous	That vile, wanchancie thing—a rape !
grin	It maks guid fellows girn an' gape,
	Wi' chokin dread ;
	An' Robin's bonnet wave wi' crape
	For Mailie dead.

VIII

	O a' ye bards on bonie Doon !
bagpipes	An' wha on Ayr your chanter's tune !
	Come, join the melancholious croon
	O' Robin's reed !
rejoice	His heart will never get aboon !
	His Mailie's dead !

EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH 59

EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH

*Friendship, mysterious cement of the soul!
Sweet'ner of Life, and solder of Society!
I owe thee much——*

BLAIR.

I

DEAR SMITH, the slee'st, pawkie thief,	artful
That e'er attempted stealth or rief!	plunder
Ye surely hae some warlock-breef	wizard-spell
Owre human hearts;	
For ne'er a bosom yet was prief	proof
Against your arts.	

II

For me, I swear by sun an' moon,	
And ev'ry star that blinks aboon,	above
Ye've cost me twenty pair o' shoon,	
Just gaun to see you;	going
And ev'ry ither pair that's done,	
Mair taen I'm wi' you.	taken

60 EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH

III

gossip
stunted

That auld, capricious carlin, Nature,
To mak amends for scrimpit stature,
She's turn'd you off, a human-creature
On her first plan ;
And in her freaks, on ev'ry feature
She's wrote the Man.

IV

seething
brain

Just now I've taen the fit o' rhyme,
My barmie noddle's working prime,
My fancy yerkit up sublime,
Wi' hasty summon :
Hae ye a leisure-moment's time
To hear what's comin ?

V

talk

trouble about

Some rhyme a neebor's name to lash ;
Some rhyme (vain thought !) for needfu' cash ;
Some rhyme to court the countra clash,
An' raise a din ;
For me, an aim I never fash ;
I rhyme for fun.

VI

The star that rules my luckless lot,
Has fated me the russet coat,

EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH 61

An' damn'd my fortune to the groat ;
But, in requit,
Has blest me with a random-shot
O' countra wit.

VII

This while my notion's taen a sklent,	turn
To try my fate in guid, black prent ;	
But still the mair I'm that way bent,	
Something cries, 'Hoolie !	Softly !
I red you, honest man, tak tent !	heed
Ye'll shaw your folly :	

VIII

'There's ither poets, much your betters,
Far seen in Greek, deep men o' letters,
Hae thought they had ensur'd their debtors,
A' future ages ;
Now moths deform, in shapeless tatters,
Their unknown pages.'

IX

Then farewell hopes o' laurel-boughs	
To garland my poetic brows !	
Henceforth I'll rove where busy ploughs	
Are whistling thrang ;	at work
An' teach the lanely heights an' howes	hollows
My rustic sang.	

62 EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH

X

careless

I'll wander on, wi' tentless heed
How never-halting moments speed,
Till Fate shall snap the brittle thread ;
 Then, all unknown,
I'll lay me with th' inglorious dead,
 Forgot and gone !

XI

well

But why o' death begin a tale ?
Just now we're living sound an' hale ;
Then top and maintop crowd the sail,
 Heave Care o'er-side !
And large, before Enjoyment's gale,
 Let's tak the tide.

XII

This life, sae far's I understand,
Is a' enchanted fairy-land,
Where Pleasure is the magic-wand,
 That, wielded right,
Maks hours like minutes, hand in hand,
 Dance by fu' light.

XIII

climbed

The magic-wand then let us wield ;
For, ance that five-an'-forty's speel'd,

EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH 63

See, crazy, weary, joyless Eild, Eild
 Wi' wrinkl'd face,
Comes hostin, hirplin owre the field, coughing :
limping
 Wi' creepin pace.

XIV

When ance life's day draws near the gloamin, twilight
Then fareweel vacant, careless roamin ;
An' fareweel chearfu' tankards foamin,
 An' social noise :
An' fareweel dear, deluding Woman,
 The joy of joys !

XV

O Life ! how pleasant, in thy morning,
Young Fancy's rays the hills adorning !
Cold-pausing Caution's lesson scorning,
 We frisk away,
Like school-boys, at th' expected warning,
 To joy an' play.

XVI

We wander there, we wander here,
We eye the rose upon the brier,
Unmindful that the thorn is near,
 Among the leaves ;
And tho' the puny wound appear,
 Short while it grieves.

64 EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH

XVII

sweated
Without
Some, lucky, find a flow'ry spot,
For which they never toil'd nor swat ;
They drink the sweet and eat the fat,
But care or pain ;
And haply eye the barren hut
With high disdain.

XVIII

quiet ; sung
With steady aim, some Fortune chase ;
Keen Hope does ev'ry sinew brace ;
Thro' fair, thro' foul, they urge the race,
And seize the prey :
Then cannie, in some cozie place,
They close the day.

XIX

And others, like your humble servan',
Poor wights ! nae rules nor roads observin,
To right or left eternal swervin,
They zig-zag on ;
Till, curst with age, obscure an' starvin,
They aften groan.

XX

Alas ! what bitter toil an' straining—
But truce with peevish, poor complaining !

EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH 65

Is Fortune's fickle *Luna* waning?
E'en let her gang!
Beneath what light she has remaining,
Let's sing our sang.

XXI

My pen I here fling to the door,
And kneel, ye Pow'rs! and warm implore,
'Tho' I should wander *Terra* o'er,
In all her climes,
Grant me but this, I ask no more,
Ay rowth o' rhymes. plenty

XXII

'Gie dreeping roasts to countra lairds, dripping
Till icicles hing frae their beards;
Gie fine braw claes to fine life-guards clothes
And maids of honor;
And yill an' whisky gie to cairds, ale; tinkers
Until they sconner. sicken

XXIII

'A title, Dempster merits it;
A garter gie to Willie Pitt;
Gie wealth to some be-ledger'd cit,
In cent. per cent.;
But give me real, sterling wit,
And I'm content

66 EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH

XXIV

meal and
water;
beefless
broth

' While ye are pleas'd to keep me hale,
I'll sit down o'er my scanty meal,
Be't water-brose or muslin-kail,
Wi' cheerfu' face,
As lang's the Muses dinna fail
To say the grace.'

XXV

ear
duck

An anxious e'e I never throws
Behint my lug, or by my nose;
I jouk beneath Misfortune's blows
As weel's I may;
Sworn foe to sorrow, care, and prose,
I rhyme away.

XXVI

sedate

O ye douce folk that live by rule,
Grave, tideless-blooded, calm an' cool,
Compar'd wi' you—O fool! fool! fool!
How much unlike!

wall

Your hearts are just a standing pool,
Your lives a dyke!

EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH 67

XXVII

Nae hair-brained, sentimental traces
In your unletter'd, nameless faces!
In *arioso* trills and graces
Ye never stray;
But *gravissimo*, solemn basses
Ye hum away.

XXVIII

Ye are sae grave, nae doubt ye're wise;
Nae ferly tho' ye do despise
The hairum-scairum, ram-stam boys,
The rattling squad:
I see ye upward cast your eyes—
Ye ken the road!

marvel
headlong

XXIX

Whilst I—but I shall haud me there,
Wi' you I'll scarce gang onie where—
Then, Jamie, I shall say nae mair,
But quat my sang,
Content wi' you to mak a pair,
Where'er I gang.

hold
quit

A DREAM

*Thoughts, words, and deeds, the Statute blames with reason ;
But surely Dreams were ne'er indicted Treason.*

On reading in the public papers, the Laureate's Ode with the other parade of June 4th, 1786, the Author was no sooner dropt asleep, than he imagined himself transported to the Birth-day Levee : and, in his dreaming fancy, made the following Address :—

I

GUID-MORNIN to your Majesty !
May Heaven augment your blisses,
On ev'ry new birth-day ye see,
A humble Poet wishes !
My Bardship here, at your Levee,
On sic a day as this is,
Is sure an uncouth sight to see,
Amang thae birth-day dresses
Sae fine this day.

those

II

busily

I see ye're complimented thrang,
By monie a lord an' lady ;
God Save the King's a cuckoo sang
That's unco easy said ay :

mighty

A DREAM

69

The poets, too, a venal gang,
 Wi' rhymes weel-turn'd an' ready,
 Wad gar you trow ye ne'er do wrang,
 But ay unerring steady,
 On sic a day.

make; think

III

For me! before a Monarch's face,
 Ev'n there I winna flatter;
 For neither pension, post, nor place,
 Am I your humble debtor:
 So, nae reflection on your Grace,
 Your Kingship to bespatter;
 There's monie waur been o' the race,
 And aiblins ane been better
 Than you this day.

worse
 maybe

IV

'Tis very true my sovereign King,
 My skill may weel be doubted;
 But facts are chiels that winna ding,
 And downa be disputed:
 Your royal nest, beneath your wing,
 Is e'en right reft and clouted,
 And now the third part o' the string,
 An' less, will gang about it
 Than did ae day.

fellows;
 be upset
 cannot

torn and
 patched

v

Far be't frae me that I aspire
 To blame your legislation,
 Or say, ye wisdom want, or fire
 To rule this mighty nation :
 But faith ! I muckle doubt, my sire,
 Ye've trusted ministration
 To chaps wha in a barn or byre
 Wad better fill'd their station,
 Than courts yon day.

vi

And now ye've gien auld Britain peace,
 Her broken shins to plaister ;
 Your sair taxation does her fleece,
 Till she has scarce a tester :
 For me, thank God, my life's a lease,
 Nae bargain wearin faster,
 Or faith ! I fear, that, wi' the geese,
 I shortly boost to pasture
 I' the craft some day.

vii

I'm no mistrusting Willie Pitt,
 When taxes he enlarges,
 (An' Will's a true guid fallow's get,
 A name not envy spairges),

That he intends to pay your debt,
 An' lessen a' your charges ;
 But, God sake ! let nae saving fit
 Abridge your bonie barges
 An' boats this day.

VIII

Adieu, my Liege ! may Freedom geck sport
 Beneath your high protection ;
 An' may ye rax Corruption's neck, wring
 And gie her for dissection !
 But since I 'm here I'll no neglect,
 In loyal, true affection,
 To pay your Queen, wi' due respect,
 My fealty an' subjection
 This great birth-day.

IX

Hail, Majesty most Excellent !
 While nobles strive to please ye,
 Will ye accept a compliment,
 A simple Bardie gies ye ?
 Thae bonie bairntime Heav'n has lent, brood
 Still higher may they heeze ye hoist
 In bliss, till Fate some day is sent,
 For ever to release ye
 Frae care that day.

X

For you, young Potentate o' Wales,
 I tell your Highness fairly,
 Down Pleasure's stream, wi' swelling sails,
 I'm tauld ye're driving rarely;
 But some day ye may gnaw your nails,
 An' curse your folly sairly,
 That e'er ye brak Diana's pales,
 Or rattl'd dice wi' Charlie
 By night or day.

XI

Yet aft a ragged cowte's been known,
 To mak a noble aiver;
 So, ye may doucely fill a throne,
 For a' their clish-ma-claver:
 There, him at Agincourt wha shone,
 Few better were or braver;
 And yet, wi' funny, queer Sir John,
 He was an unco shaver
 For monie a day.

XII

For you, right rev'rend Osnaburg,
 Name sets the lawn-aleeve sweeter,
 Altho' a ribban at your lug
 Wad been a dress completer:

A DREAM

73

As ye disown yon paughty dog,	haughty
That bears the keys of Peter,	
Then swith ! an' get a wife to hug,	haste !
Or trowth, ye 'll stain the mitre	
Some luckless day !	

XIII

Young, royal Tarry-breeks, I learn,	
Ye 've lately come athwart her—	
A glorious galley, stem an' stern	
Weel rigg'd for Venus' barter ;	
But first hang out that she 'll discern	
Your hymeneal charter ;	
Then heave aboard your grapple-airn,	grapple- iron
An', large upon her quarter,	
Come full that day.	

XIV

Ye, lastly, bonie blossoms a',
 Ye royal lasses dainty,
 Heav'n mak you guid as weel as braw,
 An' gie you lads a-plenty !
 But sneer na British boys awa !
 For kings are unco scant ay,
 An' German gentles are but sma' :
 They 're better just than want ay
 On onie day.

XV

extremely;
petted

salsed

dish

tarried

bottom;
scraped

God bless you a'! consider now,
Ye're unco muckle dautet;
But ere the course o' life be through,
It may be bitter sautet:
An' I hae seen their coggie fou,
That yet hae tarrow't at it;
But or the day was done, I trow,
The laggen they hae clautet
Fu' clean that day.

THE VISION

DUAN FIRST

I

ceased
hare
kitchen-
gardens
each

THE sun had clos'd the winter day,
The curlers quat their roaring play,
And hunger'd maukin taen her way,
To kail-yards green,
While faithless snaws ilk step betray
Whare she has been.

II

flail
live-long

The thresher's weary flingin-tree,
The lee-lang day had tired me;

And when the day had clos'd his e'e,
 Far i' the west,
 Ben i' the spence, right pensivelie,
 I gaed to rest.

Back; parlour
 went

III

There, lanely by the ingle-cheek,
 I sat and ey'd the spewing reek,
 That fill'd, wi' hoast-provoking smeek,
 The auld clay biggin;
 An' heard the restless rattons squeak
 About the riggin.

-side
 volleying
 cough-; drift
 structure
 rats
 roof-tree

IV

All in this mottie, misty clime,
 I backward mus'd on wasted time:
 How I had spent my youthfu' prime,
 An' done naething,
 But stringing blethers up in rhyme,
 For fools to sing.

dusty

nonsense

V

Had I to guid advice but herkit,
 I might, by this, hae led a market,
 Or strutted in a bank and clarkit
 My cash-account:
 While here, half-mad, half-fed, half-sarkit,
 Is a' th' amount.

-shirted

VI

weakling I started, mutt'ring 'Blockhead ! coof !'
 horny palm An' heav'd on high my waukit loof,
 To swear by a' yon starry roof,
 Or some rash aith,
 That I henceforth would be rhyme-proof
 Till my last breath—

VII

latch When click ! the string the snick did draw ;
 And jee ! the door gaed to the wa' ;
 flame And by my ingle-lowe I saw,
 Now bleezin bright,
 young A tight, outlandish hizzie, braw,
 woman Come full in sight.

VIII

peace Ye need na doubt, I held my whisht ;
 The infant aith, half-form'd, was crusht ;
 stared ; I glowr'd as eerie's I'd been dusht,
 touched In some wild glen ;
 When sweet, like modest Worth, she blusht,
 inside And stepped ben.

IX

Green, slender, leaf-clad holly-boughs
 Were twisted, gracefu', round her brows ;

I took her for some Scottish Muse,
 By that same token ;
 And come to stop those reckless vows,
 Would soon been broken.

X

A 'hair-brain'd, sentimental trace'
 Was strongly markèd in her face ;
 A wildly-witty, rustic grace
 Shone full upon her ;
 Her eye, ev'n turn'd on empty space,
 Beam'd keen with honor.

XI

Down flow'd her robe, a tartan sheen,	bright
Till half a leg was scrimply seen ;	barely
And such a leg ! my bonie Jean	
Could only peer it ;	
Sae straught, sae taper, tight an' clean	straight
Nane else came near it.	

XII

Her mantle large, of greenish hue,
 My gazing wonder chiefly drew ;
 Deep lights and shades, bold-mingling, threw
 A lustre grand ;
 And seem'd, to my astonish'd view,
 A well-known land.

XIII

Here, rivers in the sea were lost ;
 There, mountains to the skies were toss't ;
 Here, tumbling billows mark'd the coast
 With surging foam ;
 There, distant shone Art's lofty boast,
 The lordly dome.

XIV

beats
 stole

Here, Doon pour'd down his far-fetch'd floods ;
 There, well-fed Irwine stately thuds :
 Auld hermit Ayr staw thro' his woods,
 On to the shore ;
 And many a lesser torrent scuds
 With seeming roar.

XV

Low, in a sandy valley spread,
 An ancient borough rear'd her head ;
 Still, as in Scottish story read,
 She boasts a race
 To ev'ry nobler virtue bred,
 And polish'd grace.

XVI

By stately tow'r, or palace fair,
 Or ruins pendent in the air,

Bold stems of heroes, here and there,
I could discern ;
Some seem'd to muse, some seem'd to dare,
With feature stern.

XVII

My heart did glowing transport feel,
To see a race heroic wheel,
And brandish round the deep-dyed steel
In sturdy blows ;
While, back-recoiling, seem'd to reel
Their suthron foes.

XVIII

His Country's Saviour, mark him well !
Bold Richardton's heroic swell ;
The chief, on Sark who glorious fell
In high command ;
And he whom ruthless fates expel
His native land.

XIX

There, where a sceptr'd Pictish shade
Stalk'd round his ashes lowly laid,
I mark'd a martial race, pourtray'd
In colours strong :
Bold, soldier-featur'd, undismay'd,
They strode along.

THE VISION

XX

Thro' many a wild, romantic grove,
 Near many a hermit-fancied cove
 (Fit haunts for friendship or for love
 In musing mood),
 An aged Judge, I saw him rove,
 Dispensing good.

XXI

With deep-struck, reverential awe,
 The learned Sire and Son I saw :
 To Nature's God, and Nature's law,
 They gave their lore ;
 This, all its source and end to draw,
 That, to adore.

XXII

Brydon's brave ward I well could spy,
 Beneath old Scotia's smiling eye ;
 Who call'd on Fame, low standing by,
 To hand him on,
 Where many a patriot-name on high,
 And hero shone.

DUAN SECOND

I

With musing-deep, astonish'd stare,
 I view'd the heavenly-seeming Fair ;

THE VISION

81

A whisp'ring throb did witness bear
Of kindred sweet,
When with an elder sister's air
She did me greet.

II

All hail ! my own inspired Bard !
In me thy native Muse regard !
Nor longer mourn thy fate is hard,
Thus poorly low !
I come to give thee such reward,
As we bestow.

III

' Know, the great Genius of this land
Has many a light aerial band,
Who, all beneath his high command,
Harmoniously,
As arts or arms they understand,
Their labors ply.

IV

' They Scotia's race among them share :
Some fire the soldier on to dare ;
Some rouse the patriot up to bare
Corruption's heart ;
Some teach the bard—a darling care—
The tuneful art.

V

'Mong swelling floods of reeking gore,
They, ardent, kindling spirits pour ;
Or, 'mid the venal Senate's roar,
 They, sightless, stand,
To mend the honest patriot-lore,
 And grace the hand.

VI

' And when the bard, or hoary sage,
Charm or instruct the future age,
They bind the wild poetic rage
 In energy ;
Or point the inconclusive page
 Full on the eye.

VII

' Hence, Fullarton, the brave and young ;
Hence, Dempster's zeal-inspired tongue ;
Hence, sweet, harmonious Beattie sung
 His *Minstrel* lays,
Or tore, with noble ardour stung,
 The sceptic's bays.

VIII

' To lower orders are assign'd
The humbler ranks of human-kind,

The rustic bard, the laboring hind,
The artisan ;
All chuse, as various they're inclin'd,
The various man.

IX

' When yellow waves the heavy grain,
The threat'ning storm some strongly rein,
Some teach to meliorate the plain,
With tillage-skill ;
And some instruct the shepherd-train,
Blythe o'er the hill.

X

' Some hint the lover's harmless wile ;
Some grace the maiden's artless smile ;
Some soothe the laborer's weary toil
For humble gains,
And make his cottage-scenes beguile
His cares and pains.

XI

' Some, bounded to a district-space,
Explore at large man's infant race,
To mark the embryotic trace
Of rustic bard ;
And careful note each opening grace,
A guide and guard.

XII

'Of these am I—Coils my name :
And this district as mine I claim,
Where once the Campbells, chiefs of fame,
Held ruling pow'r :
I mark'd thy embryo-tuneful flame,
Thy natal hour.

XIII

'With future hope I oft would gaze,
Fond, on thy little early ways :
Thy rudely caroll'd, chiming phrase,
In uncouth rhymes ;
Fir'd at the simple, artless lays
Of other times.

XIV

I saw thee seek the sounding shore,
Delighted with the dashing roar ;
Or when the North his fleecy store
Drove thro' the sky,
I saw grim Nature's visage hoar
Struck thy young eye.

XV

'Or when the deep green-mantled earth
Warm cherish'd ev'ry flow'ret's birth,

And joy and music pouring forth
In ev'ry grove ;
I saw thee eye the gen'ral mirth
With boundless love.

XVI

' When ripen'd fields and azure skies
Call'd forth the reapers' rustling noise,
I saw thee leave their ev'ning joys,
And lonely stalk,
To vent thy bosom's swelling rise,
In pensive walk.

XVII

' When youthful Love, warm-blushing, strong,
Keen-shivering, shot thy nerves along,
Those accents grateful to thy tongue,
Th' adorèd *Name*,
I taught thee how to pour in song
To soothe thy flame.

XVIII

' I saw thy pulse's maddening play,
Wild-send thee Pleasure's devious way,
Misled by Fancy's meteor-ray,
By passion driven ; '
But yet the light that led astray
Was light from Heaven.

XIX

' I taught thy manners-painting strains
The loves, the ways of simple swains,
Till now, o'er all my wide domains
Thy fame extends;
And some, the pride of Coila's plains,
Become thy friends.

XX

' Thou canst not learn, nor can I show,
To paint with Thomson's landscape glow;
Or wake the bosom-melting throe
With Shenstone's art;
Or pour, with Gray, the moving flow
Warm on the heart.

XXI

' Yet, all beneath th' unrivall'd rose,
The lowly daisy sweetly blows;
Tho' large the forest's monarch throws
His army-shade,
Yet green the juicy hawthorn grows
Adown the glade.

XXII

'Then never murmur nor repine ;
Strive in thy humble sphere to shine ;
And trust me, not Potosi's mine,
Nor king's regard,
Can give a bliss o'ermatching thine,
A rustic Bard.

XXIII

'To give my counsels all in one :
Thy tuneful flame still careful fan ;
Preserve the dignity of Man,
With soul erect ;
And trust the Universal Plan
Will all protect.

XXIV

'And wear thou *this*'—She solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head :
The polish'd leaves and berries red
Did rustling play ;
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away.

[Notes]

HALLOWEEN

*Yes ! let the rich deride, the proud diddain,
 The simple pleasures of the lowly train :
 To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
 One native charm, than all the gloss of art.*
 GOLDSMITH.

I

UPON that night, when fairies light
 On Cassilis Downans dance,
 Or owre the lays, in splendid blaze,
 On sprightly coursers prance ;
 Or for Colean the rout is taen,
 Beneath the moon's pale beams ;
 There, up the Cove, to stray and rove,
 Among the rocks and streams
 To sport that night :

II

Amang the bonie winding banks,
 Where Doon rins, wimplin, clear ;
 Where Bruce ance ruled the martial ranks,
 An' shook his Carrick spear ;

Some merry, friendly, country-folks
 Together did convene,
 To burn their nits, an' pou their stocks,
 An' hand their Halloween
 Fu' blythe that night.

nuts;
 pull; plants
 keep

III

The lassies feat an' cleanly neat,
 Mair braw than when they're fine;
 Their faces blythe fu' sweetly kythe
 Hearts leal, an' warm, an' kin':
 The lads sae trig, wi' wooer-babs
 Weel-knotted on their garten;
 Some unco blate, an' some wi' gabs
 Gar lasses' hearts gang startin
 Whyles fast at night.

spruce
 fair
 show
 loyal; kind
 love-knots
 garters
 shy; talk
 make; beat-
 ing
 Sometimes

IV

Then, first an' foremost, thro' the kail,
 Their stocks maun a' be sought ance;
 They steek their een, an' grape an' wale
 For muckle anes, an' straught anes.
 Poor hav'rel Will fell aff the drift,
 An' wandered thro' the bow-kail,
 An' pow't, for want o' better shift,
 A runt, was like a sow-tail,
 Sae bow't that night.

[Notes]

shut; eyes;
 grope;
 choose
 big; straight
 foolish; lost
 the way
 cabbage
 pulled;
 choice
 stalk
 bent

V

mould	Then, straught or crooked, yird or nane,
pell-mell	They roar an' cry a' throu'ther;
children; run	The vera wee-things, toddlin, rin
upon	Wi' stocks out-owre their shouther:
if; pith	An' gif the custock's sweet or sour,
pocket-knives	Wi' joctelegs they taste them;
Then; above	Syne cosiely, aboon the door,
prudent	Wi' cannie care, they've plac'd them
	To lie that night.

VI

stole	The lasses staw frae 'mang them a',
[Notes]	To pou their stalks o' corn;
dodges	But Rab slips out, an' jinks about,
	Behint the muckle thorn:
	He grippet Nelly hard an' fast;
squeaked	Loud skirl'd a' the lasses;
[Notes]	But her tap-pickle maist was lost,
cuddling	Whan kiutlin in the fause-house
[Notes]	Wi' him that night.

VII

well-boarded	The auld guid-wife's weel-hoordet nits
[Notes]	Are round an' round divided,
	An' monie lads' an' lasses' fates
	Are there that night decided:

HALLOWEEN

91

Some kindle couthie, side by side,
 An' burn thegither trimly ;
 Some start awa wi' saucy pride,
 An' jump out-owre the chimlie
 Fu' high that night.

comfortably

VIII

Jean slips in twa, wi' tentie e'e ;
 Wha 'twas, she wadna tell ;
 But this is *Jock*, an' this is *me*,
 She says in to hersel :
 He blees'd owre her, an' she owre him,
 As they wad never mair part ;
 Till fuff ! he started up the lum,
 And Jean had e'en a sair heart
 To see 't that night.

watchful

whispers

chimney

IX

Poor Willie, wi' his bow-kail runt,
 Was burnt wi' primsie Mallie ;
 An' Mary, nae doubt, took the drunt,
 To be compar'd to Willie :
 Mall's nit lap out, wi' pridefu' fling,
 An' her ain fit, it burnt it ;
 While Willie lap, an' swoor by jing,
 'Twas just the way he wanted
 To be that night.

precise Moll

huff

leaped ; start

foot

X

Nell had the fause-house in her min',
 She pits hersel an' Rob in ;
 In loving bleeze they sweetly join,
 Till white in ase they're sobbin :
 Nell's heart was dancin at the view ;
 She whisper'd Rob to leuk for't :
 Rob, stownlins, prie'd her bonie mou,
 Fu' cozie in the neuk for 't,
 Unseen that night.

ashes

by stealth,
 tasted ;
 mouth
 corner

XI

But Merran sat behint their backs,
 Her thoughts on Andrew Bell ;
 She lea'es them gashing at their cracks,
 An' slips out by hersel :
 She thro' the yard the nearest taks,
 An' to the kiln she goes then,
 An' darklins grapit for the bauks,
 And in the blue-clue throws then,
 Right fear't that night.

Marian

gabbing

in the dark ;
 cross-beams
 (Notes)

XII

An' ay she win't, an' ay she swat—
 I wat she made nae jaukin ;
 Till something held within the pat,
 Guid Lord ! but she was quakin !

wound ;
 sweated
 bet ; trifling
 kiln-pot

HALLOWEEN

93

But whether 'twas the Deil himsel,
Or whether 'twas a bauk-en',
Or whether it was Andrew Bell,
She did na wait on talkin
To spier that night.

beam-end

ask

XIII

Wee Jenny to her graunie says,
' Will ye go wi' me, graunie?
I'll eat the apple at the glass,
I gat frae uncle Johnie':
She fuff't her pipe wi' sic a lunt,
In wrath she was sae vap'rin,
She notic't na an aizle brunt
Her braw, new, worset apron
Out thro' that night.

[Notes]

puffed
smoke

cinder burnt

worsted

XIV

' Ye little skelpie-limmer's-face!
I daur ye try sic sportin,
As seek the Foul Thief onie place,
For him to spae your fortune:
Nae doubt but ye may get a sight!
Great cause ye hae to fear it;
For monie a ane has gotten a fright,
An' liv'd an' died deleeret,
On sic a night.

[Notes]

Devil

tell

mad

XV

harvest ;
 Sheriffmuir
 remember
 young girl

' Ae hairst afore the Sherra-moor,
 I mind 't as weel 's yestreen—
 I was a gilpey then, I'm sure
 I was na past fyfteen :
 The simmer had been cauld an' wat,
 An' stuff was unco green ;
 An' ay a rantin kirn we gat,
 An' just on Halloween
 It fell that night.

grain ; very
 rollicking
 harvest-home

XVI

chief
 harvester

son ; child

[Notes]

off his wits

' Our stibble-rig was Rab M'Graen,
 A clever, sturdy fallow ;
 His sin gat Eppie Sim wi' wean,
 That lived in Achmachalla :
 He gat hemp-seed, I mind it weel,
 An' he made unco light o't ;
 But monie a day was by himsel,
 He was sae sairly frighted
 That vera night.'

XVII

fighting

sow

all merrily

Then up gat fechtin Jamie Fleck,
 An' he swoor by his conscience,
 That he could saw hemp-seed a peck ;
 For it was a' but nonsense :

The auld guidman raught down the pock, reached ; bag
 An' out a handfu' gied him ;
 Syne bad him slip frae 'mang the folk,
 Sometime when nae ane see'd him,
 An' try't that night.

XVIII

He marches thro' amang the stacks,
 Tho' he was something sturtin ; staggered
 The graip he for a harrow taks, dung fork
 And hauris at his curpin ; trails ;
 And ev'ry now and then, he says, crupper
 ' Hemp-seed I saw thee, sow
 An' her that is to be my lass
 Come after me, an' draw thee
 As fast this night.'

XIX

He whistl'd up *Lord Lenox' March*,
 To keep his courage cheery ;
 Altho' his hair began to arch,
 He was sae fley'd an' eerie ; scared ;
 Till presently he hears a squeak, awe-stricken
 An' then a grane an' grundle ; groan
 He by his shouther gae a keek,
 An' tumbld wi' a wintle round ; look
 Out-owre that night. summersault

XX

halting
hunchbacked

the pig
Astir

He roar'd a horrid murder-shout,
In dreadfu' desperation !
An' young an' auld come rinnin out,
An' hear the sad narration :
He swoor 'twas hilchin Jean M'Craw,
Or crouchie Merran Humphie—
Till stop ! she trotted thro' them a' ;
An' wha was it but grumphie
Asteer that night ?

XXI

have gone
winnow ;
[Notes]
all by herself

shepherd ;
few

Meg fain wad to the barn gaen,
To winn three wechts o' naething ;
But for to meet the Deil her lane,
She pat but little faith in :
She gies the herd a pickle nits,
An' twa red-cheekit apples,
To watch, while for the barn she sets,
In hopes to see Tam Kipples
That vera night.

XXII

twist

She turns the key wi' cannie thraw,
An' owre the threshold ventures ;
But first on Sawnie gies a ca',
Syne bauldly in she enters :

A ratton rattl'd up the wa',	rat
An' she cry'd, L—d preserve her !	
An' ran thro' midden-hole an' a',	[Notes]
An' pray'd wi' zeal and fervour	
Fu' fast that night.	

XXIII

They hoy't out Will, wi' sair advice ;	urged
They hecht him some fine braw ane ;	promised
It chanc'd the stack he faddom't thrice,	[Notes]
Was timmer-propt for throwin :	against
He taks a swirlie, auld moss-oak	bending
For some black gruesome carlin ;	twisted
An' loot a winze, an' drew a stroke,	beldam
Till skin in blypes cam haulin	uttered a
Aff's nieves that night.	curse, and
	made a hit
	shreds
	Off his fists

XXIV

A wanton widow Leezie was,	
As cantie as a kittlin ;	lively ; kitten
But och ! that night, amang the shaws,	woods
She gat a fearfu' settlin !	
She thro' the whins, an' by the cairn,	
An' owre the hill gaed scievin ;	careering
Whare three lairds' lands met at a burn,	brook
To dip her left sark-sleeve in	[Notes]
Was bent that night.	

XXV

Now ; fall	Whyles owre a linn the burnie plays,
	As thro' the glen it wimpl't ;
cliff	Whyles round a rocky scaur it strays,
eddy	Whyles in a wiel it dimpl't ;
	Whyles glitter'd to the nightly rays,
	Wi' bickerin, dancin dazzle ;
hid	Whyles cookit underneath the braes,
	Below the spreading hazel
	Unseen that night.

XXVI

ferns ; hillside	Amang the brachens, on the brae,
	Between her an' the moon,
young cow in the open	The Deil, or else an outler quey,
	Gat up an' gae a croon :
leaped ; sheath	Poor Leezie's heart maist lap the hool ;
lark-high	Near lav'rock-height she jumpit,
foot	But mist a fit, an' in the pool
ears	Out-owre the lugs she plumpit
	Wi' a plunge that night.

XXVII

	In order, on the clean hearth-stane,
[Notes]	The luggies three are ranged ;
	And ev'ry time great care is taen
	To see them duly changed :

HALLOWEEN

99

Auld uncle John, wha wedlock's joys
 Sin Mar's-year did desire,
 Because he gat the toom dish thrice,
 He heav'd them on the fire
 In wrath that night.

2725

empty

XXVIII

Wi' merry sangs, an' friendly cracks,
 I wat they did na weary ;
 And unco tales, an' funnie jokes—
 Their sports were cheap an' cheery :
 Till butter'd sow'ns, wi' fragrant lunt,
 Set a' their gabs a-steerin ;
 Syne, wi' a social glass o' strunt,
 They parted aff careerin
 Fu' blythe that night.

wot

wondrous

[Notes]

steam

tongues

wagging

liquor

100 NEW-YEAR MORNING SALUTATION

THE AULD FARMER'S NEW-YEAR
MORNING SALUTATION TO HIS
AULD MARE, MAGGIE

ON GIVING HER THE ACCUSTOMED RIPP OF CORN TO
HANSEL IN THE NEW-YEAR

I

handful from
the sheaf;
belly
hollow-
backed;
knobby

gone; colt
lea

A GUID NEW-YEAR I wish thee, Maggie!
Hae, there's a ripp to thy auld baggie:
Tho' thou's howe-backit now, an' knaggie,
I've seen the day
Thou could hae gaen like onie staggie,
Out-owre the lay.

II

drooping

shiny

prepared;
excite

Tho' now thou's dowie, stiff, an' crazy,
An' thy auld hide as white's a daisie,
I've seen thee dappl't, sleek an' glaizie,
A bonie gray:
He should been tight that daur't to raize thee,
Ance in a day.

III

stately,
compact
limber

Thou ance was i' the foremost rank,
A filly buirdly, steeve, an' swank;

TO HIS AULD MARE, MAGGIE 101

An' set weel down a shapely shank	
As e'er tread yird ;	earth
An' could hae flown out-owre a stank	moat
Like onie bird.	

IV

It's now some nine-an'-twenty year	
Sin' thou was my guid-father's meere ;	father-in-law's
He gied me thee, o' tocher clear,	wholly as
An' fifty mark ;	dowry
Tho' it was sma', 'twas weel-won gear,	
An' thou was stark.	strong

V

When first I gaed to woo my Jenny,	went
Ye then was trottin wi' your minnie :	mother
Tho' ye was trickie, slee, an' funnie,	slly
Ye ne'er was donsie ;	vicious
But hamely, tawie, quiet, an' cannie,	tractable
An' unco sonsie.	good-tempered

VI

That day, ye pranc'd wi' muckle pride,	
When ye bure hame my bonie bride :	
An' sweet an' gracefu' she did ride,	
Wi' maiden air !	
Kyle-Stewart I could bragged wide,	have
For sic a pair.	challenged

102 NEW-YEAR MORNING SALUTATION

VII

can ; (Notes)
stumble
stagger
goer
wind
wobble

Tho' now ye dow but hoyte and hobble,
An' wintle like a saumont-coble,
That day, ye was a jinker noble,
For heels an' win' !
An' ran them till they a' did wauble,
Far, far behin' !

VIII

skittish
tedious
snort ;
whinny
aloof

When thou an' I were young and skiegh,
An' stable-meals at fairs were driegh,
How thou wad prance, an' snore, an' skriegh,
An' tak the road !
Town's-bodies ran, an' stood abiegh,
An' ca't thee mad.

IX

wedding-
races

When thou was corn't, an' I was mellow,
We took the road ay like a swallow :
At brooses thou had ne'er a fellow,
For pith an' speed ;
But ev'ry tail thou pay't them hollow,
Whare'er thou gaed.

TO HIS AULD MARE, MAGGIE 103

X

The sma', droop-rumpl't, hunter cattle	short-rumped
Might aiblins waur't thee for a brattle ;	have beat ;
But sax Scotch miles thou try't their mettle,	spurt
An' gar't them whaizle :	wheeze
Nae whip nor spur, but just a wattle	
O' saugh or hazle.	willow

XI

Thou was a noble fittie-lan',	[Note
As e'er in tug or tow was drawn :	
Aft thee an' I, in aught hours' gaun,	[Notes]
On guid March-weather,	going
Hae turn'd sax rood beside our han'	to our own
For days thegither.	cheek

XII

Thou never braing't, an' fetch't, an' fliskit ;	pulled rashly ;
But thy auld tail thou wad hae whiskit,	stopped
An' spread abreed thy weel-fill'd brisket,	suddenly ;
Wi' pith an' pow'r ;	capered
Till sprittie knowes wad rair't, an' riskit,	
An' slypet owre.	rooty hillocks
	would have
	roared ;
	cracked
	fallen
	smoothly
	over

104 NEW-YEAR MORNING SALUTATION

XIII

	When frosts lay lang, an' snaws were deep,
	An' threaten'd labour back to keep,
dish	I gied thy cog a wee bit heap
edge	Aboon the timmer :
	I-ken'd my Maggie wad na sleep
ere	For that, or simmer.

XIV

	In cart or car thou never reestit ;
stiffest	The steyst brae thou wad hae fac't it ;
incline	Thou never lap, an' sten't, an' breastit,
leaped ;	Then stood to blaw ;
sprang	But just thy step a wee thing hastit,
jogged along	Thou snoov't awa.

XV

team ; issue	My pleugh is now thy bairntime a' ,
	Four gallant brutes as e'er did draw ;
more	Forbye sax mae I've sell't awa,
	That thou hast nurst :
	They drew me thretteen pund an' twa,
	The vera warst.

TO HIS AULD MARE, MAGGIE 105

XVI

Monie a sair darg we twa hae wrought, day's work
An' wi' the weary warl' fought!
An' monie an anxious day I thought
 We wad be beat!
Yet here to crazy age we're brought,
 Wi' something yet.

XVII

An' think na, my auld trusty servan',
That now perhaps thou's less deservin,
An' thy auld days may end in starvin;
 For my last fow, bushel
A heapet stimpert, I'll reserve ane quarter-peck
 Laid by for you.

XVIII

We've worn to crazy years thegither;
We'll toyte about wi' ane anither;
Wi' tentie care I'll flit thy tether totter
 To some hain'd rig, change
Where ye may nobly rax your leather reserved
 Wi' sma' fatigue. patch
 fill your
 stomach

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

INSCRIBED TO R. AIKEN, ESQ.

*Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.*

GRAY.

I

My lov'd, my honor'd, much respected friend !
No mercenary bard his homage pays ;
With honest pride, I scorn each selfish end,
My dearest meed, a friend's esteem and praise :
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene ;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways ;
What Aiken in a cottage would have been ;
Ah ! tho' his worth unknown, far happier there
I ween !

II

wall November chill blows loud wi' angry sigh ;
The short'ning winter-day is near a close ;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh ;
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose :

COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT 107

The toil-worn Cotter frae his labor goes—
 This night his weekly moil is at an end,
 Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
 Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
 And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hame-
 ward bend.

III

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
 Beneath the shelter of an aged tree ;
 Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin, stacher through totter
 To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' noise and glee. fluttering
 His wee bit ingle, blinkin bonilie,
 His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
 The lispin infant, prattling on his knee,
 Does a' his weary kiaugh and care beguile, cark
 And makes him quite forget his labor and his toil.

IV

Belyve, the elder bairns come drapping in, By-and-bye
 At service out, amang the farmers roun' ;
 Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie rin follow ;
 A cannie errand to a neebor town : heedful run
 Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman grown, quiet
 In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
 Comes hame ; perhaps, to shew a braw new gown,
 Or deposite her sair-won penny-fee, hard- ; wages
 To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

108 COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

V

With joy unfeign'd, brothers and sisters meet,
 asks And each for other's weelfare kindly spiers :
 The social hours, swift-wing'd, unnotic'd fleet ;
 wonders Each tells the uncos that he sees or hears.
 The parents partial eye their hopeful years ;
 Anticipation forward points the view ;
 The mother, wi' her needle and her sheers,
 Makes ; Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new ;
 clothes The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

VI

Their master's and their mistress's command
 The younkers a' are warned to obey ;
 diligent And mind their labors wi' an eydent hand,
 trifle And ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to jauk or play :
 'And O ! be sure to fear the Lord alway,
 And mind your duty, duly, morn and night ;
 Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
 Implore His counsel and assisting might :
 They never sought in vain that sought the Lord
 aright.'

VII

But hark ! a rap comes gently to the door ;
 Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
 Tells how a neebor lad came o'er the moor,
 To do some errands, and convoy her hame.

COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT 109

The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek ;
With heart-struck anxious care, enquires his name,
While Jenny haffins is afraid to speak ; half
Weel-pleas'd the mother hears, it's nae wild, worth-
less rake.

VIII

With kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben ; inside
A strappin' youth, he takes the mother's eye ;
Blythe Jenny sees the visit's no ill taen ;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye. chats ; cattle
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
But blate and laithfu', scarce can weel behave ; shy ; sheepish
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' and sae grave ;
Weel-pleas'd to think her bairn's respected like the
lave. rest

IX

O happy love ! where love like this is found :
O heart-felt raptures ! bliss beyond compare !
I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare :—
'If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
In other's arms, breathe out the tender tale
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the ev'ning
gale.'

110 COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

X

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
 A wretch ! a villain ! lost to love and truth !
 That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
 Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth ?
 Curse on his perjur'd arts ! dissembling, smooth !
 Are honor, virtue, conscience, all exil'd ?
 Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
 Points to the parents fondling o'er their child ?
 Then paints the ruin'd maid, and their distraction
 wild ?

XI

	But now the supper crowns their simple board,
wholesome	The healsome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food ;
milk ; cow	The soupe their only hawkie does afford,
beyond ; wall	That, 'yont the hallan snugly chows her cood ;
	The dame brings forth, in complimentary mood,
-saved	To grace the lad, her weel-hain'd kebbuck, fell ;
cheese ;	And aft he 's prest, and aft he ca's it guid ;
pungent	The frugal wife, garrulous, will tell,
twelve-	month ; fax ;
flower	How 'twas a towmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.

XII

	The chearfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
	They, round the ingle, form a circle wide ;
	The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
(Notes)	The big ha'-Bible, ance his father's pride.

COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT 111

His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare ; grey side-locks
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care, selects
And ' Let us worship God ! ' he says, with solemn air.

XIII

They chant their artless notes in simple guise,
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim ;
Perhaps *Dundee's* wild-warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive *Martyrs*, worthy of the name ;
Or noble *Elgin* beets the heaven-ward flame, fans
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays :
Compar'd with these, Italian trills are tame ;
The tickl'd ears no heart-felt raptures raise ;
Nae unison hae they, with our Creator's praise.

XIV

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
How Abram was the friend of God on high ;
Or, Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny ;
Or, how the royal Bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire ;
Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry ;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire ;
Or other holy Seers that tune the sacred lyre.

XV

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme :
 How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed ;
 How He, who bore in Heaven the second name,
 Had not on earth whereon to lay His head ;
 How His first followers and servants sped ;
 The precepts sage they wrote to many a land :
 How he, who lone in Patmos banishèd,
 Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
 And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounce'd by
 Heaven's command.

XVI

Then kneeling down to Heaven's Eternal King,
 The saint, the father, and the husband prays :
 Hope 'springs exulting on triumphant wing,'
 That thus they all shall meet in future days,
 There, ever bask in uncreated rays,
 No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear,
 Together hymning their Creator's praise,
 In such society, yet still more dear ;
 While circling Time moves round in an eternal
 sphere.

XVII

Compar'd with this, how poor Religion's pride,
 In all the pomp of method, and of art ;
 When men display to congregations wide
 Devotion's ev'ry grace, except the heart

COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT 113

The Power, incens'd, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole ;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well-pleas'd, the language of the soul,
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.

XVIII

Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way ;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest :
The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,
That He who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide ;
But, chiefly, in their hearts with Grace Divine pre-
side.

XIX

From scenes like these, old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd abroad :
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
' An honest man 's the noblest work of God ' ;
And certes, in fair Virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind ;
What is a lordling's pomp ? a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of Hell, in wickedness refin'd !

XX

O Scotia ! my dear, my native soil !
 For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent !
 Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
 Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content !
 And O ! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
 From Luxury's contagion, weak and vile !
 Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
 A virtuous populace may rise the while,
 And stand a wall of fire around their much-lov'd
 Isle.

XXI

O Thou ! who pour'd the patriotic tide,
 That stream'd thro' Wallace's undaunted heart,
 Who dar'd to, nobly, stem tyrannic pride,
 Or nobly die, the second glorious part :
 (The patriot's God, peculiarly Thou art,
 His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward !)
 O never, never Scotia's realm desert ;
 But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard
 In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard !

TO A MOUSE

115

TO A MOUSE

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST WITH THE PLOUGH,
NOVEMBER 1785

I

Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,	sleek
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!	
Thou need na start awa sae hasty	
Wi' bickering brattle!	hurrying scamper
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,	loth
Wi' murdering pattle!	plough-staff

II

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
 Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion
 An' fellow mortal!

III

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;	sometimes
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!	
A daimen icker in a thrave	odd ear; twenty-four sheaves
'S a sma' request;	
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,	what's left
An' never miss't!	

IV

Thy wee-bit housie, too, in ruin!	
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin!	feeble; winds

An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
 coarse grass O' foggage green !
 An' bleak December's win's ensuin,
 bitter Baith snell an' keen !

v

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
 An' weary winter comin fast,
 An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
 Thou thought to dwell,
 Till crash ! the cruel coulter past
 Out thro' thy cell.

vi

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,
 Has cost thee monie a weary nibble !
 Now thou's turned out, for a' thy trouble,
 Without ; holding But house or hald,
 endure To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
 hoar-frost An' cranreuch cauld !

vii

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
 alone In proving foresight may be vain :
 The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
 askew Gang aft agley,
 An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
 For promis'd joy !

VIII

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me !
The present only toucheth thee :
But och ! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear !
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear !

EPISTLE TO DAVIE, A BROTHER POET

JANUARY

I

WHILE winds frae aff Ben-Lomond blaw,	
And bar the doors wi' drivin' snaw,	
And hing us owre the ingle,	fire
I set me down to pass the time,	
And spin a verse or twa o' rhyme,	
In hamely, westlin jingle :	westland
While frosty winds blaw in the drift,	
Ben to the chimla lug,	Right to the chimney corner
I grudge a wee the great-folk's gift,	
That live sae bien an' snug :	prosperous
I tent less, and want less	value
Their roomy fire-side ;	
But hanker, and canker,	
To see their cursed pride.	

II

chaps ; some-
times

dolts ; roister

spend

trouble

wealth

whole ;
soundask not
[Notes]

fig

It's hardly in a body's pow'r,
 To keep, at times, frae being sour,
 To see how things are shar'd ;
 How best o' chieles are whyles in want,
 While coofs on countless thousands rant,
 And ken na how to ware 't ;
 But Davie, lad, ne'er fash your head,
 Tho' we hae little gear ;
 We're fit to win our daily bread,
 As lang's we're hale and fier :
 ' Mair spier na, nor fear na,'
 Auld age ne'er mind a feg ;
 The last o't, the warst o't,
 Is only but to beg.

III

To lie in kilns and barns at e'en,
 When banes are craz'd, and bluid is thin,
 Is, doubtless, great distress !
 Yet then content could make us blest ;
 Ev'n then, sometimes, we 'd snatch a taste
 Of truest happiness.
 The honest heart that's free frae a'
 Intended fraud or guile,
 However Fortune kick the ba',
 Has ay some cause to smile ;

And mind still, you'll find still,
 A comfort this nae sma';
 Nae mair then, we'll care then,
 Nae farther can we fa'.

IV

What tho', like commoners of air,
 We wander out, we know not where,
 But either house or hal' ?
 Yet Nature's charms, the hills and woods,
 The sweeping vales, and foaming floods,
 Are free alike to all.
 In days when daisies deck the ground,
 And blackbirds whistle clear,
 With honest joy our hearts will bound,
 To see the coming year :
 On braes when we please then,
 We'll sit an' sowth a tune ;
 Syne rhyme till 't we'll time till 't,
 An' sing 't when we hae done.

Without ;
 holding

hill-sides
 hum
 Then

V

It's no in titles nor in rank :
 It's no in wealth like Lon'on Bank,
 To purchase peace and rest.
 It's no in makin muckle, mair ;
 It's no in books, it's no in lear,
 To make us truly blest :
 If happiness hae nct her seat
 An' centre in the breast,

much, more
 learning

We may be wise, or rich, or great,
 But never can be blest !
 Nae treasures nor pleasures
 Could make us happy lang ;
 The heart ay 's the part ay
 That makes us right or wrang.

VI

Think ye, that sic as you and I,
 Wha drudge and drive thro' wet and dry,
 Wi' never ceasing toil ;
 Think ye, are we less blest than they,
 Wha scarcely tent us in their way,
 As hardly worth their while ?
 Alas ! how oft, in haughty mood,
 God's creatures they oppress !
 Or else, neglecting a' that 's guid,
 They riot in excess !
 Baith careless and fearless
 Of either Heaven or Hell ;
 Esteeming and deeming
 It a' an idle tale !

VII

Then let us chearfu' acquiesce,
 Nor make our scanty pleasures less
 By pining at our state :
 And, even should misfortunes come,
 I here wha sit hae met wi' some,
 An 's thankfu' for them yet,

note

And am

They gie the wit of age to youth ;
 They let us ken oursel ;
 They make us see the naked truth,
 The real guid and ill :
 Tho' losses and crosses
 Be lessons right severe,
 There 's wit there, ye 'll get there,
 Ye 'll find nae other where.

VIII

But tent me, Davie, ace o' hearts !	listen to
(To say aught less wad wrang the cartes,	cards
And flatt'ry I detest)	
This life has joys for you and I ;	
And joys that riches ne'er could buy,	
And joys the very best.	
There 's a' the pleasures o' the heart,	
The lover an' the frien' :	
Ye hae your Meg, your dearest part,	
And I my darling Jean !	
It warms me, it charms me	
To mention but her name :	
It heats me, it beets me,	kindles
And sets me a' on flame !	

IX

O all ye Pow'rs who rule above !
 O Thou whose very self art love !

Thou know'st my words sincere !
The life-blood streaming thro' my heart,
Or my more dear immortal part,
Is not more fondly dear !
When heart-corroding care and grief
Deprive my soul of rest,
Her dear idea brings relief
And solace to my breast.
Thou Being All-seeing,
O, hear my fervent pray'r !
Still take her, and make her
Thy most peculiar care !

x

All hail ! ye tender feelings dear !
The smile of love, the friendly tear,
The sympathetic glow !
Long since, this world's thorny ways
Had number'd out my weary days,
Had it not been for you !
Fate still has blest me with a friend
In every care and ill ;
And oft a more endearing band,
A tie more tender still.
It lightens, it brightens
The tenebrific scene,
To meet with, and greet with
My Davie or my Jean !

XI

O, how that Name inspires my style !	
The words come skelpin' rank an' file,	spanking
Amaist before I ken !	
The ready measure rins as fine,	
As Phœbus and the famous Nine	
Were glowrin owre my pen.	overlooking
My spaviet Pegasus will limp,	spavined
Till ance he's fairly het ;	hot
And then he'll hilch, an' stilt, an' jimp,	hobble ; limp ; jump
And rin an unco fit ;	uncommon burst
But least then, the beast then	
Should rue this hasty ride,	
I'll light now, and dight now	wipe
His sweaty, wizen'd hide.	

THE LAMENT

OCCASIONED BY THE UNFORTUNATE ISSUE OF A
FRIEND'S AMOUR

*Alas ! how oft does Goodness wound itself,
And sweet Affection prove the spring of Woe !*
HOME.

I

O THOU pale Orb that silent shines
While care-untroubled mortals sleep !
Thou seest a wretch who inly pines,
And wanders here to wail and weep !

With Woe I nightly vigils keep,
Beneath thy wan, unwarining beam ;
And mourn, in lamentation deep,
How life and love are all a dream !

II

I joyless view thy rays adorn
The faintly-markèd, distant hill ;
I joyless view thy trembling horn
Reflected in the gurgling rill :
My fondly-fluttering heart, be still !
Thou busy pow'r, Remembrance, cease !
Ah ! must the agonizing thrill
For ever bar returning Peace ?

III

No idly-feign'd, poetic pains
My sad, love-lorn lamentings claim :
No shepherd's pipe—Arcadian strains ;
No fabled tortures quaint and tame.
The plighted faith, the mutual flame,
The oft-attested Pow'rs above,
The promis'd father's tender name,
These were the pledges of my love !

IV

Encircled in her clasping arms,
How have the raptur'd moments flown !
How have I wished for Fortune's charms,
For her dear sake, and her's alone !

And, must I think it ! is she gone,
My secret heart's exulting boast ?
And does she heedless hear my groan ?
And is she ever, ever lost ?

V

O ! can she bear so base a heart,
So lost to honour, lost to truth,
As from the fondest lover part,
The plighted husband of her youth ?
Alas ! Life's path may be unsmooth !
Her way may lie thro' rough distress !
Then, who her pangs and pains will soothe,
Her sorrows share, and make them less ?

VI

Ye wingèd Hours that o'er us pass'd,
Enraptur'd more the more enjoy'd,
Your dear remembrance in my breast
My fondly treasur'd thoughts employ'd :
That breast, how dreary now, and void,
For her too scanty once of room !
Ev'n ev'ry ray of Hope destroy'd,
And not a wish to gild the gloom !

VII

The morn, that warns th' approaching day,
Awakes me up to toil and woe ;
I see the hours in long array,
That I must suffer, lingering slow :

Full many a pang, and many a throe,
Keen Recollection's direful train,
Must wring my soul, ere Phœbus, low,
Shall kiss the distant western main.

VIII

And when my nightly couch I try,
Sore-harass'd out with care and grief,
My toil-beat nerves and tear-worn eye
Keep watchings with the nightly thief:
Or, if I slumber, Fancy, chief,
Reigns, haggard-wild, in sore affright:
Ev'n day, all-bitter, brings relief
From such a horror-breathing night.

IX

O thou bright Queen, who, o'er th' expanse
Now highest reign'st, with boundless sway!
Oft has thy silent-marking glance
Observ'd us, fondly-wand'ring, stray!
The time, unheeded, sped away,
While Love's luxurious pulse beat high,
Beneath thy silver-gleaming ray,
To mark the mutual-kindling eye.

X

O scenes in strong remembrance set!
Scenes, never, never to return!
Scenes if in stupor I forget,
Again I feel, again I burn!

DESPONDENCY

127

From ev'ry joy and pleasure torn,
Life's weary vale I wander thro' ;
And hopeless, comfortless, I'll mourn
A faithless woman's broken vow !

DESPONDENCY

An Ode

I

OPPRESS'D with grief, oppress'd with care,
A burden more than I can bear,
I set me down and sigh ;
O Life ! thou art a galling load,
Along a rough, a weary road,
To wretches such as I !
Dim-backward, as I cast my view,
What sick'ning scenes appear !
What sorrows yet may pierce me thro',
Too justly I may fear !
Still caring, despairing,
Must be my bitter doom ;
My woes here shall close ne'er
But with the closing tomb !

II

Happy ye sons of busy life,
Who, equal to the bustling strife,

No other view regard !
Ev'n when the wished end 's denied,
Yet while the busy means are plied,
They bring their own reward :
Whilst I, a hope-abandoned wight,
Unfitted with an aim,
Meet ev'ry sad returning night
And joyless morn the same.
You, bustling and justling,
Forget each grief and pain ;
I, listless yet restless,
Find ev'ry prospect vain.

III

How blest the Solitary's lot,
Who, all-forgetting, all-forgot,
Within his humble cell—
The cavern, wild with tangling roots—
Sits o'er his newly-gather'd fruits,
Beside his crystal well !
Or haply to his ev'ning thought,
By unfrequented stream,
The ways of men are distant brought,
A faint-collected dream ;
While praising, and raising
His thoughts to Heav'n on high,
As wand'ring, meand'ring,
He views the solemn sky.

IV

Than I, no lonely hermit plac'd
 Where never human footstep trac'd,
 Less fit to play the part ;
 The lucky moment to improve,
 And just to stop, and just to move,
 With self-respecting art :
 But ah ! those pleasures, loves, and joys,
 Which I too keenly taste,
 The Solitary can despise—
 Can want and yet be blest !
 He needs not, he heeds not
 Or human love or hate ;
 Whilst I here must cry here
 At perfidy ingrate !

V

O enviable early days,
 When dancing thoughtless pleasure's maze,
 To care, to guilt unknown !
 How ill exchange'd for riper times,
 To feel the follies or the crimes
 Of others, or my own !
 Ye tiny elves that guiltless sport,
 Like linnets in the bush,
 Ye little know the ills ye court,
 When manhood is your wish !

130 MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN

The losses, the crosses
That active man engage ;
The fears all, the tears all
Of dim declining Age !

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN

A Dirge

I

WHEN chill November's surly blast
Made fields and forests bare,
One ev'ning, as I wand'red forth
Along the banks of Ayr,
I spied a man, whose aged step
Seem'd weary, worn with care,
His face was furrow'd o'er with years,
And hoary was his hair.

II

' Young stranger, whither wand'rest thou ? '
Began the rev'rend Sage ;
' Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain,
Or youthful pleasure's rage ?
Or haply, prest with cares and woes,
Too soon thou hast began
To wander forth, with me to mourn
The miseries of Man.

III

'The sun that overhangs yon moors,
Out-spreading far and wide,
Where hundreds labour to support
A haughty lordling's pride :
I've seen yon weary winter-sun
Twice forty times return ;
And ev'ry time has added proofs,
That Man was made to mourn.

IV

'O Man ! while in thy early years,
How prodigal of time !
Mis-spending all thy precious hours,
Thy glorious, youthful prime !
Alternate follies take the sway,
Licentious passions burn :
Which tenfold force gives Nature's law,
That Man was made to mourn.

V

'Look not alone on youthful prime,
Or manhood's active might ;
Man then is useful to his kind,
Supported is his right :
But see him on the edge of life,
With cares and sorrows worn ;
Then Age and Want—O ill-match'd pair !—
Shew Man was made to mourn.

VI

' A few seem favourites of Fate,
 In Pleasure's lap carest ;
 Yet think not all the rich and great
 Are likewise truly blest :
 But oh ! what crowds in ev'ry land,
 All wretched and forlorn,
 Thro' weary life this lesson learn,
 That Man was made to mourn.

VII

' Many and sharp the num'rous ills
 Inwoven with our frame !
 More pointed still we make ourselves
 Regret, remorse, and shame !
 And Man, whose heav'n-erected face
 The smiles of love adorn,—
 Man's inhumanity to man
 Makes countless thousands mourn !

VIII

' See yonder poor, o'erlabour'd wight,
 So abject, mean, and vile,
 Who begs a brother of the earth
 To give him leave to toil ;
 And see his lordly fellow-worm
 The poor petition spurn,
 Unmindful, tho' a weeping wife
 And helpless offspring mourn.

IX

‘ If I ’m design’d yon lordling’s slave—
By Nature’s law design’d—
Why was an independent wish
E’er planted in my mind ?
If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty, or scorn ?
Or why has Man the will and pow’r
To make his fellow mourn ?

X

‘ Yet let not this too much, my son,
Disturb thy youthful breast :
This partial view of human-kind
Is surely not the last !
The poor, oppress’d, honest man
Had never, sure, been born,
Had there not been some recompense
To comfort those that mourn !

XI

‘ O Death ! the poor man’s dearest friend,
The kindest and the best !
Welcome the hour my agèd limbs
Are laid with thee at rest !
The great, the wealthy fear thy blow,
From pomp and pleasure torn ;
But, oh ! a blest relief to those
That weary-laden mourn !’

WINTER

A Dirge

I

THE wintry west extends his blast,
And hail and rain does blaw ;
Or the stormy north sends driving forth
The blinding sleet and snaw :
Wild-tumbling brown, the burn comes down,
And roars frae bank to brae :
While bird and beast in covert rest,
And pass the heartless day.

II

'The sweeping blast, the sky o'ercast,'
The joyless winter day
Let others fear, to me more dear
Than all the pride of May :
The tempest's howl, it soothes my soul,
My griefs it seems to join ;
The leafless trees my fancy please,
Their fate resembles mine !

III

Thou Pow'r Supreme, whose mighty scheme
These woes of mine fulfil,
Here, firm I rest, they must be best,
Because they are Thy will !

Then all I want (O, do Thou grant
This one request of mine !):
Since to enjoy Thou dost deny,
Assist me to resign.

A PRAYER IN THE PROSPECT
OF DEATH

O Thou unknown, Almighty Cause
Of all my hope and fear !
In whose dread presence, ere an hour,
Perhaps I must appear !

If I have wander'd in those paths
Of life I ought to shun—
As something, loudly, in my breast,
Remonstrates I have done—

Thou know'st that Thou hast form'd me
With passions wild and strong ;
And list'ning to their witching voice
Has often led me wrong.

Where human weakness has come short,
Or frailty stept aside,
Do Thou, All-good—for such Thou art—
In shades of darkness hide.

126 TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY

Where with intention I have err'd,
No other plea I have,
But, Thou art good ; and Goodness still
Delighteth to forgive.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH
IN APRIL 1786

I

WEE, modest, crimson-tippèd flow'r,
Thou 's met me in an evil hour ;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem :
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonie gem.

II

Alas ! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,
Wi' spreckl'd breast !
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY 137

III

Could blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth ;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth sparkled
 Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent-earth
 Thy tender form.

IV

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield ; must
But thou, beneath the random bield shelter
 O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field, bare stubble-
 Unseen, alane.

V

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
 In humble guise ;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
 And low thou lies !

VI

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade !

138 TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY

By love's simplicity betray'd,
And guileless trust;
Till she, like thee, all soil'd, is laid
Low i' the dust.

VII

Such is the fate of simple Bard,
On Life's rough ocean luckless starr'd!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And overwhelm him o'er!

VIII

Such fate to suffering Worth is giv'n,
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n.
By human pride or cunning driv'n
To misery's brink;
Till, wretch'd of ev'ry stay but Heav'n,
He, ruin'd, sink!

IX

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's plough-share drives elate,
Full on thy bloom.
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom!

TO RUIN

I

ALL hail, inexorable lord !
 At whose destruction-breathing word,
 The mightiest empires fall !
 Thy cruel, woe-delighted train,
 The ministers of grief and pain,
 A sullen welcome, all !
 With stern-resolv'd, despairing eye,
 I see each aimed dart ;
 For one has cut my dearest tie,
 And quivers in my heart.
 Then low'ring and pouring,
 The storm no more I dread ;
 Tho' thick'ning and black'ning
 Round my devoted head.

II

And thou grim Pow'r, by Life abhorr'd,
 While Life a pleasure can afford,
 O ! hear a wretch's pray'r !
 No more I shrink appall'd, afraid ;
 I court, I beg thy friendly aid,
 To close this scene of care !

140 EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND

When shall my soul, in silent peace,
Resign Life's joyless day?
My weary heart its throbbings cease,
Cold-mould'ring in the clay?
No fear more, no tear more
To stain my lifeless face,
Enclaspèd and graspèd
Within thy cold embrace!

EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND

May — 1786.

I

I LANG hae thought, my youthfu' friend,
A something to have sent you,
Tho' it should serve nae ither end
Than just a kind memento:
But how the subject-theme may gang,
Let time and chance determine:
Perhaps it may turn out a sang;
Perhaps, turn out a sermon.

II

Ye'll try the world soon, my lad;
And, Andrew dear, believe me,
Ye'll find mankind an unco squad,
And muckle they may grieve ye:

strange

EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND 141

For care and trouble set your thought,
Ev'n when your end's attained ;
And a' your views may come to nought,
Where ev'ry nerve is strained.

III

I'll no say, men are villains a' :
The real, harden'd wicked,
Wha hae nae check but human law,
Are to a few restricked ;
But, och ! mankind are unco weak mighty
An' little to be trusted ;
If Self the wavering balance shake,
It's rarely right adjusted !

IV

Yet they wha fa' in Fortune's strife,
Their fate we should na censure ;
For still, th' important end of life
They equally may answer :
A man may hae an honest heart,
Tho' poortith hourly stare him ; poverty
A man may tak a neebor's part,
Yet hae nae cash to spare him.

V

Ay free, aff han', your story tell,
When wi' a bosom cronie ;
But still keep something to yoursel
Ye scarcely tell to onie :

142 EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND

pry Conceal yoursel as weel's ye can
 Frae critical dissection :
 But keek thro' ev'ry other man
 Wi' sharpen'd, sly inspection.

VI

flame The sacred lowe o' weel-plac'd love,
 Luxuriantly indulge it ;
 attempt But never tempt th' illicit rove,
 [Notes] Tho' naething should divulge it :
 I waive the quantum o' the sin,
 The hazard of concealing ;
 But, och ! it hardens a' within,
 And petrifies the feeling !

VII

To catch Dame Fortune's golden smile,
 Assiduous wait upon her ;
 And gather gear by ev'ry wile
 That's justify'd by honor :
 Not for to hide it in a hedge,
 Nor for a train-attendant ;
 But for the glorious privilege
 Of being independent.

VIII

The fear o' Hell's a hangman's whip
 To haud the wretch in order ;
 But where ye feel your honour grip,
 Let that ay be your border :

Its slightest touches, instant pause—
 Debar a' side-pretences ;
 And resolutely keep its laws,
 Uncaring consequences.

IX

The great Creator to revere
 Must sure become the creature ;
 But still the preaching cant forbear,
 And ev'n the rigid feature :
 Yet ne'er with wits profane to range
 Be complaisance extended ;
 An atheist-laugh's a poor exchange
 For Deity offended !

X

When ranting round in Pleasure's ring, frolicking
 Religion may be blinded ;
 Or if she gie a random sting,
 It may be little minded ;
 But when on Life we're tempest-driv'n—
 A conscience but a canker—
 A correspondence fix'd wi' Heav'n
 Is sure a noble anchor !

XI

Adieu, dear, amiable youth !
 Your heart can ne'er be wanting !
 May prudence, fortitude, and truth,
 Erect your brow undaunting !

144 ON A SCOTCH BARD

heed the
counsel

In ploughman phrase, 'God send you speed,'
Still daily to grow wiser;
And may ye better reek the rede,
Than ever did th' adviser!

ON A SCOTCH BARD

GONE TO THE WEST INDIES

I

supp
rhyme

comrade;
given us all
the slip

A' ye wha live by sowps o' drink,
A' ye wha live by crambo-clink,
A' ye wha live and never think,
Come, mourn wi' me!
Our billie's gien us a' a jink,
An' owre the sea!

II

jovial set
frolic

Lament him a' ye rantin core,
Wha dearly like a random-splore;
Nae mair he'll join the merry roar
In social key;
For now he's taen anither shore,
An' owre the sea!

III

wish

The bonie lasses weel may wiss him,
And in their dear petitions place him:

The widows, wives, an' a' may bless him
 Wi' tearfu' e'e,
 For weel I wat they'll sairly miss him wot
 That 's owre the sea !

IV

O Fortune, they hae room to grumble !
 Hadst thou taen aff some drowsy bummle, drowse
 Wha can do nought but fyke an' fumble, fuss
 'Twad been nae plea ;
 But he was gleg as onie wumblc, nimble;
 That 's owre the sea ! wimble

V

Auld, cantie Kyle may weepers wear, cheerful
 An' staim them wi' the saut, saut tear :
 'Twill mak her poor auld heart, I fear,
 In flinders flee :
 He was her Laureat monie a year,
 That 's owre the sea !

VI

He saw Misfortune's cauld nor-west
 Lang-mustering up a bitter blast ;
 A jillet brak his heart at last, jilt
 Ill may she be !
 So, took a birth afore the mast, berth
 An' owre the sea.

vii

rod
meal and
water

To tremble under Fortune's cummock,
On scarce a bellyfu' o' drummock,
Wi' his proud, independent stomach,
 Could ill agree ;
So, row't his hurdies in a hammock,
 An' owre the sea.

rolled ;
buttocks

viii

pockets

He ne'er was gien to great misguiding,
Yet coin his pouches wad na bide in ;
Wi' him it ne'er was under hiding,
 He dealt it free :
The Muse was a' that he took pride in,
 That's owre the sea.

ix

shelter; place

Jamaica bodies, use him weel,
An' hap him in a cosie biel :
Ye'll find him ay a dainty chiel,
 An' fou o' glee :
He wad na wrang'd the vera Deil,
 That's owre the sea.

would not
have

x

unkind

Fareweel, my rhyme-composing billie !
Your native soil was right ill-willie ;

A DEDICATION

147

But may ye flourish like a lily,
 Now bonilie !
 I'll toast you in my hindmost gillie, last gill
 Tho' owre the sea !

A DEDICATION

TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

EXPECT na, Sir, in this narration,
 A fleechin, fleeth'rin Dedication, wheedling,
 To roose you up, an' ca' you guid, flattering
 An' sprung o' great an' noble bluid, praise
 Because ye're surnam'd like His Grace,
 Perhaps related to the race :
 Then, when I'm tired—and sae are ye,
 Wi' monie a fulsome, sinfu' lie—
 Set up a face how I stop short,
 For fear your modesty be hurt.

This may do—maun do, Sir, wi' them wha
 Maun please the great-folk for a wamefou' ; bellyful
 For me ! sae laigh I need na bow, low
 For, Lord be thankit, I can plough ;
 And when I downa yoke a naig, cannot
 Then, Lord be thankit, I can beg ;
 Sae I shall say, an' that's nae flatt'rin,
 It's just sic poet an' sic patron.

troubles

The Poet, some guid angel help him,
Or else, I fear, some ill ane skelp him !
He may do weel for a' he's done yet,
But only he's no just begun yet.

The Patron (sir, ye maun forgie me ;
I winna lie, come what will o' me),
On ev'ry hand it will allow'd be,
He's just—nae better than he should be.

sometimes

I readily and freely grant,
He downa see a poor man want ;
What's no his ain he winna tak it ;
What ance he says, he winna break it ;
Ought he can lend he'll no refus't,
Till aft his guidness is abus'd ;
And rascals whyles that do him wrang,
Ev'n that, he does na mind it lang ;
As master, landlord, husband, father,
He does na fail his part in either.

But then, nae thanks to him for a' that ;
Nae godly symptom ye can ca' that ;
It's naething but a milder feature
Of our poor, sinfu', corrupt nature :
Ye'll get the best o' moral works,
'Mang black Gentoos, and pagan Turks,
Or hunters wild on Ponotaxi,
Wha never heard of orthodoxy.

That he's the poor man's friend in need,
 The gentleman in word and deed,
 It's no thro' terror of damnation;
 It's just a carnal inclination,
 And ceh! that's nae regeneration.

Morality, thou deadly bane,
 Thy tens o' thousands thou hast slain!
 Vain is his hope, whase stay an' trust is
 In moral mercy, truth, and justice!

No—stretch a point to catch a plack;	farthing
Abuse a brother to his back;	
Steal thro' the winnock frae a whore,	window
But point the rake that taks the door;	
Be to the poor like onie whunstane,	
And haud their noses to the grunstone;	grindstone
Ply ev'ry art o' legal thieving;	
No matter—stick to sound believing.	

Learn three-mile pray'rs, an' half-mile graces,	
Wi' weel-spread looves, an' lang, wry faces;	palms
Grunst up a solemn, lengthen'd groan,	
And damn a' parties but your own;	
I'll warrant then, ye're nae deceiver,	
A steady, sturdy, staunch believer.	

O ye wha leave the springs o' Calvin,	
For gumlie dubs of your ain delvin!	muddy puddles
Ye sons of Heresy and Error,	
Ye'll some day squeel in quaking terror,	

When Vengeance draws the sword in wrath,
 And in the fire throws the sheath ;
 When Ruin, with his sweeping besom,
 Just frets till Heav'n commission gies him ;
 While o'er the harp pale Misery moans,
 And strikes the ever-deep'ning tones,
 Still louder shrieks, and heavier groans !

almost
 Your pardon, sir, for this digression :
 I maist forgat my Dedication ;
 But when divinity comes 'cross me,
 My readers still are sure to lose me.

mad
 So, Sir, you see 'twas nae daft vapour ;
 But I maturely thought it proper,
 When a' my works I did review,
 To dedicate them, Sir, to you :
 Because (ye need na tak' it ill),
 I thought them something like yoursel.

extremely
 reluctant ;
 bad at it
 I'll
 Then patronize them wi' your favor,
 And your petitioner shall ever——
 I had amaist said, ever pray,
 But that 's a word I need na say ;
 For prayin, I hae little skill o't,
 I 'm baith dead-sweer, an' wretched ill o't ;
 But I 'se repeat each poor man's pray'r,
 That hears or hears about you, Sir :——

' May ne'er Misfortune's gowling bark
 Howl thro' the dwelling o' the clerk ! lawyer
 May ne'er his gen'rous, honest heart,
 For that same gen'rous spirit smart !
 May Kennedy's far-honor'd name
 Lang beet his hymeneal flame, feed
 Till Hamiltons, at least a dizzen,
 Are frae their nuptial labors risen :
 Five bonie lasses round their table,
 And sev'n braw fellows, stout an' able,
 To serve their king an' country weel,
 By word, or pen, or pointed steel !
 May Health and Peace, with mutual rays,
 Shine on the ev'ning o' his days ;
 Till his wee, curlie John's ier-oe, great-
grandchild
 When ebbing life nae mair shall flow,
 The last, sad, mournful rites bestow ! '

I will not wind a lang conclusion,
 With complimentary effusion ;
 But, whilst your wishes and endeavours
 Are blest with Fortune's smiles and favours,
 I am, dear sir, with zeal most fervent,
 Your much indebted, humble servant.

But if (which Pow'rs above prevent)
 That iron-hearted carl, Want,
 Attended, in his grim advances,
 By sad mistakes, and black mischances,

TO A LOUSE

While hopes, and joys, and pleasures fly him,
 Make you as poor a dog as I am,
 Your 'humble servant' then no more;
 For who would humbly serve the poor?
 But, by a poor man's hopes in Heav'n!
 While recollection's pow'r is giv'n,
 If, in the vale of humble life,
 The victim sad of Fortune's strife,
 I, thro' the tender-gushing tear,
 Should recognise my master dear;
 If friendless, low, we meet together,
 Then, sir, your hand—my FRIEND and BROTHER!

TO A LOUSE

ON SEEING ONE ON A LADY'S BONNET AT CHURCH

I

crawling
wonder

HA! whare ye gaun, ye crowlin ferlie?
 Your impudence protects you sairly,

swagger

I canna say but ye strunt rarely
 Owre gauze and lace,
 Tho' faith! I fear ye dine but sparely
 On sic a place.

II

Ye ugly, creepin, blastit wonner,
 Detested, shunn'd by saunt an' sinner,

158

Foot

Swith ! in some beggar's hauffet squattle :
There ye may creep, and sprawl, and sprattle,
Wi' ithir kindred, jumping cattle,

Off! temples
 squat
 scramble

In shoals and nations ;

Whare horn nor bane ne'er daur unsettle
Your thick plantations.

Now hand you there! ye're out o' sight, keep
Below the fatt'rils, snug an' tight; faldernals
Na, faith ye yet! ye'll no be right,
 Till ye've got on it—
The vera tapmost, tow'ring height
 O' Miss's bonnet.

My sooth ! right bauld ye set your nose out,	
As plump an' grey as onie grozet :	gooseberry
O for some rank, mercurial rozet,	rosin
Or fell, red smeddum,	deadly ; powder
I'd gie ye sic a hearty dose o't,	
Wad dress your droddum .	breech

VI

would not
have
flannel cap
maybe ;
small ragged
undervest
balloon
bunnet

I wad na been surpris'd to spy
You on an auld wife's flainen toy ;
Or aiblins some bit duddie boy,
On's wyliecoat ;
But Maw's fine Lunardi ! fye !
How daur ye do't ?

VII

abroad

O Jenny, dinna toss your head,
An' set your beauties a' abroad !
Ye little ken what curs'd speed
The blastie 's makin !
Thae winks an' finger-ends, I dread.
Are notice takin :

Thae

VIII

O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us !
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,
An' foolish notion :
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
An' ev'n devotion !

EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK 155

EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK

AN OLD SCOTTISH BARD, APRIL 1, 1786

I

WHILE briers an' woodbines budding green,
And pairicks scaichin loud at e'en,
An' morning poussie whiddin seen,
Inspire my Muse,
This freedom, in an unknown frien'
I pray excuse.

partridges
calling
the hare
scudding

II

On Fasten-e'en we had a rockin,
To ca' the crack and weave our stockin ;
And there was muckle fun and jokin,
Ye need na doubt ;
At length we had a hearty yokin,
At 'sang about.'

[Notes]
meeting
have a chat

set-to

III

There was ae sang, amang the rest,
Aboon them a' it pleas'd me best,
That some kind husband had addrest
To some sweet wife :
It thirl'd the heart-strings thro' the breast,
A' to the life.

one

Above

thrilled

IV

I've scarce heard ought describ'd sae weel,
 What gen'rous, manly bosoms feel;
 Thought I, 'Can this be Pope or Steele,
 Or Beattie's wark?'

chap

They tald me 'twas an odd kind chiel
 About Muirkirk.

V

singling-out

asked

It pat me fidgin-fain to hear't,
 An' sae about him there I spier't;
 Then a' that kent him round declar'd

genius

He had ingine;
 That name excell'd it, few cam near't,
 It was sae fine:

VI

saber

That, set him to a pint of ale,
 An' either dounce or merry tale,
 Or rhymes an' songs he 'd make himsel,
 Or witty catches,
 'Tween Inverness an' Terriodale,
 He had few matches.

VII

man

human

Then up I got, an' swear an aith,
 Tho' I should pawn my plough an' graith.

EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK 157

Or die a cadger pownie's death,	hawker
At some dyke-back,	Behind a
A pint an' gill I'd gie them baith,	fence
To hear your crack.	talk

VIII

But, first an' foremost, I should tell,	
Amaist as soon as I could spell,	
I to the crambo-jingle fell ;	rhymin'
Tho' rude an' rough—	
Yet crooning to a body's sel,	humming
Does weel eneugh.	

IX

I am nae poet, in a sense ;
 But just a rhymer like by chance,
 An' hae to learning nae pretence ;
 Yet, what the matter ?
 Whene'er my Muse does on me glance,
 I jingle at her.

X

Your critic-folk may cock their nose,
 And say, ' How can you e'er propose,
 You wha ken hardly verse frae prose,
 To mak a sang ?'
 But, by your leaves, my learned foes,
 Ye're maybe wrang.

158 EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK

XI

	What's a' your jargon o' your Schools,
	Your Latin names for horns an' stools?
	If honest Nature made you fools,
serves	What sairs your grammers?
	Ye'd better taen up spades and shoals,
stone-breaking.	Or knappin-hammers.

XII

dumplings	A set o' dull, conceited hashes
	Confuse their brains in college-classes,
young bullocks	They gang in stirks, and come out asses,
	Plain truth to speak;
then	Ai' syne they think to climb Parnassus
	By dint o' Greek!

XIII

	Gie me ae spark o' Nature's fire,
	That's a' the learning I desire;
puddle	Then, tho' I drudge thro' dub an' mire
	At pleugh or cart,
	My Muse, tho' hamely in attire,
	May touch the heart.

XIV

spark	O for a spunk o' Allan's glee,
sly	Or Fergusson's, the bauld an' slee,

W. R. O. U.

EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK 159

Or bright Lapraik's, my friend to be,
 If I can hit it !
 That would be lear eneugh for me,
 If I could get it.

xv

Now, sir, if ye hae friends enow,
 Tho' real friends I b'lieve are few ;
 Yet, if your catalogue be fow, full
 I 'se no insist : I'll
 But, gif ye want ae friend that's true,
 I 'm on your list.

xvi

I winna blaw about mysel, brag
 As ill I like my fauts to tell ;
 But friends, an' folks that wish me well,
 They sometimes roose me ; praise
 Tho', I maun own, as monie still
 As far abuse me.

xvii

There's ae wee faut they whyles lay to me, one
 I like the lasses—Gude forgie me ! God
 For monie a plack they wheedle frae me coin
 At dance or fair ;
 Maybe some ither thing they gie me,
 They weel can spare.

XVIII

But Mauchline Race or Mauchline Fair,
 I should be proud to meet you there :
 We'll We 'se gie ae night's discharge to care,
 If we forgather ;
 And hae a swap o' rhymin-ware
 Wi' ane anither.

XIX

four-gill cup,
 we'll make
 christen ;
 steaming
 Then ;
 draught

The four-gill chap, we 'se gar him clatter,
 An' kirsen him wi' reekin water ;
 Syne we 'll sit down an' tak our whitter,
 To cheer our heart ;
 An' faith, we 'se be acquainted better
 Before we part.

XX

worldly
 manners

the hunt for
 coin

Awa ye selfish, warly race,
 Wha think that havins, sense, an' grace,
 Ev'n love an' friendship should give place
 To Catch-the-Plack !
 I dinna like to see your face,
 Nor hear your crack.

XXI

Bat ye whom social pleasure charms,
 Whose hearts the tide of kindness warms,

SECOND EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK 161

Who hold your being on the terms,
 'Each aid the others,'
Come to my bowl, come to my arms,
 My friends, my brothers !

XXII

But, to conclude my lang epistle,
As my auld pen's worn to the grissle,
Twa lines frae you wad gar me fistle, tingle
 Who am most fervent,
While I can either sing or whistle,
 Your friend and servant.

SECOND EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK

APRIL 21, 1785

I

'WHILE new-ca'd kye rowte at the stake new-driven ;
An' pownies reek in pleugh or braik, low
This hour on e'enin's edge I take, smoke ;
 To own I'm debtor harrow
To honest-hearted, auld Lapraik,
 For his kind letter.

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162 SECOND EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK

II

Jaded	Forjesket sair, with weary legs,
ridges	Rattlin the corn out-owre the rigs,
distributing	Or dealing thro' amang the naigs
	Their ten-hours' bite,
	My awkart Muse sair pleads and begs,
	I would na write.

III

feckless, exhausted girl	The tapetless, ramfeezl'd hizzie,
	She's saft at best an' something lazy :
	Quo' she : ' Ye ken we've been sae busy
	This month an' mair,
	That trowth, my head is grown right dizzie,
aching	An' something sair.'

IV

dull	Her dowff excuses pat me mad :
lazy	' Conscience,' says I, ' ye thowless jad !
scroed	I'll write, an' that a hearty blaud,
	This vera night ;
do not	So dinna ye affront your trade,
	But rhyme it right.

V

' Shall bauld Lapraik, the king o' hearts,
Tho' mankind were a pack o' cartes,

SECOND EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK 168

Roose you sae weel for your deserts, Praise
 In terms sae friendly ;
 Yet ye 'll neglect to shaw your parts
 An' thank him kindly?'

VI

Sae I gat paper in a blink,
An' down gaed stumpie in the ink :
Quoth I : ‘ Before I sleep a wink,
I vow I'll close it :
An' if ye winna mak it clink,
By Jove, I'll prose it !’

twinkling

rhyme

VII

Sae I've begun to scrawl, but whether
In rhyme, or prose, or baith thegither,
Or some hotch-potch that's rightly neither,
Let time mak proof ;
But I shall scribble down some blether
Just clean aff-loof.

VIII

**My worthy friend, ne'er grudge an' carp,
Tho' Fortune use you hard an' sharp ;
Come, kittle up your moorland harp** tickle
Wi' gleesome touch !
Ne'er mind how Fortune waft an' warp ; woof
She's but a bitch.

164 SECOND EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK

IX

jerk ;	She's gien me monie a jirt an' fleg,
scare	Sin' I could striddle owre a rig ;
straddle	But, by the Lord, tho' I should beg
	Wi' lyart pow,
grey head	I'll laugh an' sing, an' shake my leg,
dance	As lang's I dow !
can	

X

	Now comes the sax-an-twentieth simmer
woods	I've seen the bud upo' the timmer,
jade	Still persecuted by the limmer
	Frae year to year ;
fickle gossip	But yet, despite the kittle kimmer,
	I, Rob, am here.

XI

	Do ye envy the city gent,
counter ;	Behint a kist to lie an' sklent ;
cheat	Or purse-proud, big wi' cent. per cent.
	An' muckle wame,
stomach	In some bit brugh to represent
borough	A bailie's name ?
town magis-	
trate's	

XII

laughty,	Or is't the paughty feudal thane,
ashirt; shining	Wi' ruff'd sark an' glancing cane,

SECOND EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK 165

Wha thinks himsel nae sheep-shank bane, [Notes]
But lordly stalks ;
While caps an' bonnets aff are taen,
As by he walks ?

XIII

' O Thou wha gies us each guid gift !
Gie me o' wit an' sense a lift, load
Then turn me, if Thou please, adrift
Thro' Scotland wide ;
Wi' cits nor lairds I wadna shift,
In a' their pride !'

XIV

Were this the charter of our state,
' On pain o' hell be rich an' great,'
Damnation then would be our fate,
Beyond remead ; remedy
But, thanks to heaven, that's no the gate way
We learn our creed.

XV

For thus the royal mandate ran,
When first the human race began :
' The social, friendly, honest man,
Whate'er he be,
'Tis he fulfils great Nature's plan,
And none but he.'

166 SECOND EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK

XVI

O mandate glorious and divine !
The followers o' the ragged Nine—
Poor, thoughtless devils !—yet may shine
 In glorious light ;
While sordid sons o' Mammon's line
 Are dark as night !

XVII

Tho' here they scrape, an' squeeze, an' growl,
Their worthless neivefu' of a soul
May in some future carcase howl,
 The forest's fright ;
Or in some day-detesting owl
 May shun the light.

XVIII

Then may Lapraik and Burns arise,
To reach their native, kindred skies,
And sing their pleasures, hopes an' joys,
 In some mild sphere ;
Still closer knit in friendship's ties,
 Each passing year !

TO WILLIAM SIMPSON OF
OCHILTREE

MAY 1785

I

I gat your letter, winsome Willie ;	
Wi' gratefu' heart I thank you brawlie ;	handsomely
Tho' I maun say 't, I wad be silly	
And unco vain,	mighty
Should I believe, my coaxin billie,	fellow
Your flatterin strain.	

II

But I'se believe ye kindly meant it :	I'll
I sud be laith to think ye hinted	
Ironie satire, sidelins sklented,	sideways squinted
On my poor Musie ;	
Tho' in sic phraisin terms ye've penn'd it,	wheedling
I scarce excuse ye.	

III

My senses wad be in a creel,	[Notes]
Should I but dare a hope to speel,	climb
Wi' Allan, or wi' Gilbertfield,	[Notes]
The braes o' fame ;	
Or Fergusson, the writer-chiel,	lawyer-chap
A deathless name.	

IV

	(O Fergusson ! thy glorious parts
	Ill suited law's dry, musty arts !
whinstone	My curse upon your whunstone hearts,
	Ye E'nbrugh gentry !
	The tythe o' what ye waste at cartes
Would have stored	Wad stow'd his pantry !)

V

	Yet when a tale comes i' my head,
rent	Or lasses gie my heart a screed—
sometimes ; death	As whyles they 're like to be my dead,
	(O sad disease !)
tickle	I kittle up my rustic reed ;
	It gies me ease.

VI

tingle with delight	Auld Coila, now, may fidge fu' fain,
	She's gotten bardies o' her ain ;
[Notes] spare	Chiels wha their chanters winna hain,
	But tune their lays,
	Till echoes a' resound again
	Her weel-sung praise.

VII

Nae Poet thought her worth his while,
To set her name in measur'd style ;

TO WILLIAM SIMPSON 169

She lay like some unkend-of isle	
Beside New Holland,	
Or whare wild-meeting oceans boil	
Besouth Magellan.	South of

VIII

Ramsay an' famous Fergusson	
Gied Forth an' Tay a lift aboon ;	a lift-up
Yarrow an' Tweed, to monie a tune,	
Owre Scotland rings ;	
While Irwin, Lugar, Ayr, an' Doon	
Naebody sings.	

IX

Th' Illissus, Tiber, Thames, an' Seine,	
Glide sweet in monie a tunefu' line :	
But, Willie, set your fit to mine,	foot
An' cock your crest !	
We'll gar our streams and burnies shine	make ; brooklets
Up wi' the best.	

X

We'll sing auld Coila's plains an' fells,	
Her moors red-brown wi' heather bells,	
Her banks an' braes, her dens an' dells,	hill-sides
Whare glorious Wallace	
Aft bure the gree, as story tells,	bore off the prize
Frae Suthron billies.	

XI

At Wallace' name, what Scottish blood
But boils up in a spring-tide flood ?
Oft have our fearless fathers strode
By Wallace' side,
red-wat-shod Still pressing onward, red-wat-shod,
Or glorious dy'd !

XII

hollows O, sweet are Coila's haughs an' woods,
linnets When lintwhites chant amang the buds,
sporting ; And jinkin hares, in amorous whids,
gambols Their loves enjoy ;
coos While thro' the braes the cushat croods
With wailfu' cry !

XIII

Ev'n winter bleak has charms to me,
When winds rave thro' the naked tree ;
Or frosts on hills of Ochiltree
Are hoary gray ;
Or blinding drifts wild-furious flee,
Dark'ning the day !

XIV

O Nature ! a' thy shews an' forms
To feeling, pensive hearts hae charms !

TO WILLIAM SIMPSON 171

Whether the summer kindly warms,
 Wi' life an' light ;
 Or winter howls, in gusty storms,
 The lang, dark night !

XV

The Muse, nae poet ever fand her,	found
Till by himsel he learn'd to wander,	
Adown some trottin burn's meander,	brook's
An' no think lang :	
O, sweet to stray, an' pensive ponder	
A heart-felt sang !	

XVI

The warly race may drudge an' drive,	worldly
Hog-shouter, jundie, stretch, an' strive ;	push ; ply the
Let me fair Nature's face describe,	elbows
And I, wi' pleasure,	describe
Shall let the busy, grumbling hive	
Bum owre their treasure.	Hum

XVII

Fareweel, my rhyme-composing brither !	
We've been owre lang unkend to ither :	too long
Now let us lay our heads thegither,	
In love fraternal :	
May Envy wallop in a tether,	dangle in
Black fiend, infernal !	a rope

XVIII

[Notes] While Highlandmen hate tolls an' taxes ;
While moorlan' herds like guid, fat braxies ;
While Terra Firma, on her axis,
Diurnal turns ;
Count on a friend, in faith an' practice,
In Robert Burns.

POSTSCRIPT

XIX

pin My memory's no worth a preen :
I had amaist forgotten clean,
Ye bade me write you what they mean
[Notes] By this New-Light,
shepherds. 'Bout which our herds sae aft hae been
Maist like to fight.

XX

striplings In days when mankind were but callans ;
At grammar, logic, an' sic talents,
They took nae pains their speech to balance,
Or rules to gie ;
vernacular But spak their thoughts in plain, braid Lallans,
Like you or me.

XXI

those In thae auld times, they thought the moon,
shirt Just like a sark, or pair o' shoon,

TO WILLIAM SIMPSON 173

Wore by degrees, till her last roon	round
Gaed past their viewin ;	Went
An' shortly after she was done,	
They gat a new ane.	

XXII

This past for certain, undisputed ;	
It ne'er cam i' their heads to doubt it,	
Till chieks gat up an' wad confute it,	fellows
An' ca'd it wrang ;	
An' muckle din there was about it,	
Baith loud an' lang.	

XXIII

Some herds, weel learn'd upo' the Beuk,	
Wad threap auld folk the thing misteuk ;	maintain
For 'twas the auld moon turn'd a neuk	corner
An' out o' sight.	
An' backlins-comin to the leuk,	backwards-;
She grew mair bright.	look

XXIV

This was deny'd, it was affirm'd ;	
The herds and hissels were alarm'd ;	flocks
The rev'rend gray-beards rav'd an' storm'd,	
That beardless laddies	
Should think they better were inform'd	
Than their auld daddies.	

174 TO WILLIAM SIMPSON

XXV

	Frae less to mair, it gaed to sticks ;
bumps ;	Frae words an' aiths, to clours an' nicks ;
cuts	An' monie a fallow gat his licks,
punishment	Wi' hearty crunt ;
blow	An' some, to learn them for their tricks,
teach	Were hang'd an' brunt.
burned	

XXVI

	This game was play'd in monie lands,
	An' Auld-Light caddies bure sic hands,
	That faith, the youngsters took the sands
	Wi' nimble shanks
	Till lairds forbade, by strict commands,
	Sic bluidy pranks.
varlets ; bore	

XXVII

	But New-Light herds gat sic a cowe,
	Folk thought them ruin'd stick-an-stowe ;
	Till now, amaist on ev'ry knowe
	Ye'll find ane placed ;
	An' some, their New-Light fair avow,
	Just quite barefac'd.
down-setting	
completely	
hillock	

XXVIII

Nae doubt the Auld-Light flocks are bleatin ;
 Their zealous herds are vex'd and sweatin ;

TO WILLIAM SIMPSON 175

Mysel, I've even seen them greetin	weeping
Wi' girmn spite,	snarling
To hear the moon sae sadly lie'd on	
By word an' write.	

XXIX

But shortly they will cove the louns !	scare; rascals
Some Auld-Light herds in neebor touns	
Are mind't, in things they ca' balloons,	
To tak a flight,	
An' stay ae month amang the moons	
An' see them right.	

XXX

Guid observation they will gie them ;	
An' when the auld moon's gaun to lea'e them,	
The hindmost shaird, they'll fetch it wi' them,	shard
Just i' their pouch ;	pocket
An' when the New-Light billies see them,	
I think they'll crouch !	

XXXI

Sae, ye observe that a' this clatter	
Is naething but a 'moonshine matter' ;	
But tho' dull prose-folk Latin splatter	
In logic tulzie,	squabble
I hope we, Bardies, ken some better	
Than mind sic brulzie.	such a brawl

EPISTLE TO JOHN RANKINE

ENCLOSING SOME POEMS

I

pick

[Notes]

O ROUGH, rude, ready-witted Rankine,
The wale o' cocks for fun an' drinkin' !
There's monie godly folks are thinkin'
Your dreams and tricks
Will send you, Korah-like, a-sinkin
Straught to Auld Nick's.

II

stories

Ye hae sae monie cracks an' cants,
And in your wicked drucken rants,
Ye mak a devil o' the saunts,
An' fill them fou' ;
And then their failings, flaws, an' wants
Are a' seen thro'.

III

Hypocrisy, in mercy spare it !
That holy robe, O, dinna tear it !

EPISTLE TO JOHN RANKINE 177

Spare 't for their sakes, wha aften wear it—
The lads in black ;
But your curst wit, when it comes near it,
Rives 't aff their back.

tears

IV

Think, wicked sinner, wha ye're skaithing :
It's just the Blue-gown badge an' claithing
O' saunts ; tak that, ye lea'e them naething
To ken them by
Frae onie unregenerate heathen,
Like you or I.

injuring

[Notes]

V

I've sent you here some rhyming ware
A' that I bargain'd for, an' mair ;
Sae, when ye hae an hour to spare,
I will expect,
Yon sang ye'll sen't, wi' cannie care,
And no neglect.

send it

VI

Tho' faith, sma' heart hae I to sing :
My Muse dow scarcely spread her wing !
I've play'd mysel a bonie spring,
An' danc'd my fill !
I'd better gaen an' sair't the King
At Bunker's Hill.

can

tune

have gone ;
served

178 EPISTLE TO JOHN RANKINE

VII

went
partridge

'Twas ae night lately, in my fun,
I gaed a rovin wi' the gun,
An' brought a pairtrick to the grun'—
A bonie hen ;
And, as the twilight was begun,
Thought nane wad ken.

VIII

stroked; a bit
worry

the Kirk-
Session
whole

The poor, wee thing was little hurt ;
I strakit it a wee for sport,
Ne'er thinkin they wad fash me for't ;
But, Deil-ma-care !
Somebody tells the Poacher-Court
The hale affair.

IX

lost my
money

Some auld, us'd hands had taen a note,
That sic a hen had got a shot ;
I was suspected for the plot ;
I scorn'd to lie ;
So gat the whistle o' my groat,
An' pay't the fee.

X

pick
shot

But, by my gun, o' guns the wale,
An' by my pouter an' my hail,

EPISTLE TO JOHN RANKINE 179

An' by my hen, an' by her tail,	
I vow an' swear!	
The game shall pay, owre moor an' dale,	
For this, niest year!	next

XI

As soon's the clockin-time is by,	clucking-
An' the wee pouts begun to cry,	chicks
Lord, I'se hae sportin by an' by	I'll
For my gowd guinea;	[Notes]
Tho' I should herd the buckskin kye	[Notes]
For't, in Virginia!	

XII

Trowth, they had muckle for to blame!	
"Twas neither broken wing nor limb,	
But twa-three chaps about the wame,	knocks; belly
Scarce thro' the feathers;	
An' baith a yellow George to claim	guinea
An' thole their blethers!	endure; nonsense

XIII

It pits me ay as mad's a hare;	
So I can rhyme nor write nae mair;	
But pennyworths again is fair,	tit-for-tat
When time's expedient:	
Meanwhile I am, respected Sir,	
Your most obedient.	

SONG

TUNE: *Corn Rigs*

I

ridges

careless
dark and
dawn

It was upon a Lammas night,
 When corn rigs are bonie,
 Beneath the moon's unclouded light,
 I held awa to Annie;
 The time flew by, wi' tentless heed;
 Till, 'tween the late and early,
 Wi' sma' persuasion she agreed
 To see me thro' the barley.
 Corn rigs, an' barley rigs,
 An' corn rigs are bonie:
 I'll ne'er forget that happy night,
 Amang the rigs wi' Annie.

II

knew

The sky was blue, the wind was still,
 The moon was shining clearly;
 I set her down, wi' right good will,
 Amang the rigs o' barley:
 I ken't her heart was a' my ain;
 I lov'd her most sincerely;
 I kiss'd her owre and owre again,
 Amang the rigs o' barley.

III

I lock'd her in my fond embrace;
 Her heart was beating rarely:

NOW WESTLIN WINDS 181

My blessings on that happy place,
Amang the rigs o' barley !
But by the moon and stars so bright,
That shone that hour so clearly !
She ay shall bless that happy night
Amang the rigs o' barley.

IV

I hae been blythe wi' comrades dear ;
I hae been merry drinking ;
I hae been joyfu' gath'rin gear ;
I hae been happy thinking :
But a' the pleasures e'er I saw,
Tho' three times doubl'd fairly—
That happy night was worth them a',
Amang the rigs o' barley.
Corn rigs, an' barley rigs,
An' corn rigs are bonie :
I'll ne'er forget that happy night,
Amang the rigs wi' Annie.

money-
making

SONG: COMPOSED IN AUGUST

I

Now westlin winds and slaught'ring guns
Bring Autumn's pleasant weather ;
The gorcock springs on whirring wings
Amang the blooming heather :

western

moorcock

182 NOW WESTLIN WINDS

Now waving grain, wide o'er the plain,
Delights the weary farmer ;
The moon shines bright, as I rove by night
To muse upon my charmer.

II

The paitrick lo'es the fruitfu' fells,
The plover lo'es the mountains ;
The woodcock haunts the lonely dells,
The soaring hern the fountains ;
Thro' lofty groves the cushat roves,
The path o' man to shun it ;
The hazel bush o'erhangs the thrush,
The spreading thorn the linnet.

III

Thus ev'ry kind their pleasure find,
The savage and the tender ;
Some social join, and leagues combine,
Some solitary wander :
Avaunt, away, the cruel sway !
Tyrannic man's dominion !
The sportsman's joy, the murd'ring cry,
The flutt'ring, gory pinion !

IV

But, Peggy dear, the evening's clear,
Thick flies the skimming swallow,
The sky is blue, the fields in view
All fading-green and yellow :

FROM THEE ELIZA

183

Come let us stray our gladsome way,
And view the charms of Nature ;
The rustling corn, the fruited thorn,
And ilka happy creature.

every

v

We'll gently walk, and sweetly talk,
While the silent moon shines clearly ;
I'll clasp thy waist, and, fondly prest,
Swear how I lo'e thee dearly :
Not vernal show'rs to budding flow'rs,
Not Autumn to the farmer,
So dear can be as thou to me,
My fair, my lovely charmer !

SONG : FROM THEE ELIZA

TUNE : *Gilderoy*

I

FROM thee Eliza, I must go,
And from my native shore :
The cruel fates between us throw
A boundless ocean's roar ;
But boundless oceans, roaring wide
Between my Love and me,
They never, never can divide
My heart and soul from thee.

•

THE FAREWELL

II

Farewell, farewell, Eliza dear,
 The maid that I adore !
 A boding voice is in mine ear,
 We part to meet no more !
 But the latest throb that leaves my heart,
 While Death stands victor by,
 That throb, Eliza, is thy part,
 And thine that latest sigh !

THE FAREWELL

TO THE BRETHREN OF ST. JAMES'S LODGE,
 TARBOLTON

TUNE: *Good-night, and joy be wi' you a'.*

I

ADIEU ! a heart-warm, fond adieu ;
 Dear Brothers of the *Mystic Tie* !
 Ye favour'd, ye enlighten'd few,
 Companions of my social joy !
 Tho' I to foreign lands must hie,
 Pursuing Fortune's slidd'ry ba' ;
 With melting heart and brimful eye,
 I'll mind you still, tho' far awa.

slippery

II

Oft have I met your social band,
 And spent the cheerful, festive night ;
 Oft, honour'd with supreme command,
 Presided o'er the *Sons of Light* ;
 And by that *Hieroglyphic* bright,
 Which none but *Craftsmen* ever saw !
 Strong Mem'ry on my heart shall write
 Those happy scenes, when far awa.

III

May Freedom, Harmony, and Love,
 Unite you in the *Grand Design*,
 Beneath th' Omniscient Eye above—
 The glorious *Architect* Divine—
 That you may keep th' *Unerring Line*,
 Still rising by the *Plummet's Law*,
 Till *Order* bright completely shine,
 Shall be my pray'r, when far awa.

IV

And You farewell! whose merits claim
 Justly that *Highest Badge* to wear :
 Heav'n bless your honour'd, noble Name,
 To Masonry and Scotia dear !
 A last request permit me here,
 When yearly ye assemble a',
 One round, I ask it with a tear,
 To him, the Bard that's far awa.

[Notes]

health round

EPITAPH ON A HENPECKED SQUIRE

As father Adam first was fool'd,
 A case that's still too common,
 Here lies a man a woman rul'd :
 The Devil ruled the woman.

EPIGRAM ON SAID OCCASION

 O DEATH, had'st thou but spar'd his life,
 Whom we this day lament !
 would have We freely wad exchanged the wife,
 An' a' been weel content.

grave Ev'n as he is, cauld in his graff,
 The swap we yet will do 't ;
 old wife's Tak thou the carlin's carcass aff,
 Thou 'lt ; Thou 'se get the saul o' boot.
 into the
 bargain

A N O T H E R

ONE Queen Artemisa, as old stories tell,
 When depriv'd of her husband she lovèd so well,
 In respect for the love and affection he'd show'd her,
 She reduc'd him to dust and she drank up the powder.
 But Queen Netherplace, of a diff'rent complexion,
 When call'd on to order the fun'ral direction,
 Would have eat her dead lord, on a slender pretence,
 Not to show her respect, but—to save the expense !

EPITAPHS

ON A CELEBRATED RULING ELDER

HERE Souter Hood in death does sleep:	Cobbler
In hell, if he's gane thither,	
Satan, gie him thy gear to keep ;	money
He'll haud it weel thegither.	take good care of it

ON A NOISY POLEMIC

BELOW thir stanes lie Jamie's banes :	those
O Death, it's my opinion,	
Thou ne'er took such a bleth'rin bitch	gabbling
Into thy dark dominion.	

ON WEE JOHNNIE

Hic jacet wee Johnie

WHOE'ER thou art, O reader, know,
 That Death has murder'd Johnie,
An' here his *body* lies fu' low—
 For *saul* he ne'er had onie.

FOR THE AUTHOR'S FATHER

O YE whose cheek the tear of pity stains,
Draw near with pious rev'rence, and attend !
Here lie the loving husband's dear remains,
The tender father, and the gen'rous friend.

The pitying heart that felt for human woe,
The dauntless heart that fear'd no human pride,
The friend of man—to vice alone a foe ;
For 'ev'n his failings lean'd to virtue's side.'

FOR ROBERT AIKEN, Esq.

Know thou, O stranger to the fame
Of this much lov'd, much honour'd name!
(For none that knew him need be told),
A warmer heart Death ne'er made cold.

FOR GAVIN HAMILTON, Esq.

THE poor man weeps—here Gavin sleeps,
Whom canting wretches blam'd ;
But with such as he, where'er he be,
May I be sav'd or damn'd.

A BARD'S EPITAPH

I

Is there a whim-inspired fool,	
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,	too
Owre blate to seek, owre proud to snool?—	modest ;
	cringe
Let him draw near ;	
And owre this grassy heap sing dool,	woe
And drap a tear.	

II

Is there a Bard of rustic song,
 Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,
 That weekly this aréa throng?—
 O, pass not by !
 But with a frater-feeling strong,
 Here, heave a sigh.

III

Is there a man, whose judgment clear
 Can others teach the course to steer,
 Yet runs, himself, life's mad career
 Wild as the wave?—
 Here pause—and, thro' the starting tear,
 Survey this grave.

IV

The poor inhabitant below
Was quick to learn and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow
 And softer flame ;
But thoughtless follies laid him low,
 And stain'd his name.

V

Reader, attend ! whether thy soul
Soars Fancy's flights beyond the pole,
Or darkling grubs this earthly hole
 In low pursuit ;
Know, prudent, cautious, self-control
 Is wisdom's root.



Swan Island or Bag O' Ness

Painted by Alexander Nasmyth 1827-8

The National Gallery of Scotland 24 by 18 in

ADDED, EDINBURGH 1787

DEATH AND DOCTOR HORNBOOK

A True Story

I

SOME books are lies frae end to end,
And some great lies were never penn'd :
Ev'n ministers, they hae been kend,
In holy rapture,
A rousing whid at times to vend, sb
And nail't wi' Scripture.

II

But this that I am gaun to tell, going
Which lately on a night befel,
Is just as true's the Deil's in hell
Or Dublin city :
That e'er he nearer comes oursel
'S a muckle pity !

192 DEATH AND DOCTOR HORNBOOK

III

village ale ;
jolly
drunk
staggered
now and
then ; care
clear

The clachan yill had made me canty,
I was na fou, but just had plenty :
I stacher'd whyles, but yet took tent ay
To free the ditches ;
An' hillocks, stanes, an' bushes, kend ay
Frae ghaists an' witches.

IV

stare
above

The rising moon began to glow
The distant Cumnock Hills out-owre :
To count her horns, wi' a' my pow'r
I set mysel ;
But whether she had three or four,
I cou'd na tell.

V

steady
at times
run

I was come round about the hill,
And todlin down on Willie's mill,
Setting my staff wi' a' my skill
To keep me sicker ;
Tho' leeward whyles, against my will,
I took a bicker.

VI

[Notes]
put ;
ghostly dread

I there wi' *Something* does forgather,
That pat me in an eerie swither ;

DEATH AND DOCTOR HORNBOOK 193

An awfu' scythe, out-owre ae shouther,	across one
Clear-dangling, hang;	hung
A three-tae'd leister on the ither	three-pronged
Lay, large an' lang.	fish-spear

VII

Its stature seem'd lang Scotch ells twa;	[Notes]
The queerest shape that e'er I saw,	
For fient a wame it had ava;	fiend; belly;
And then its shanks,	at all
They were as thin, as sharp an' sma'	
As cheeks o' branks.	[Notes]

VIII

'Guid-een,' quo' I; 'Friend! hae ye been	
mawin,	
When ither folk are busy sawin?'	[Notes]
It seem'd to mak a kind o' stan',	halt
But naething spak.	
At length, says I: 'Friend! whare ye gaun?'	where are ye going
Will ye go back?'	i.e. to the tavern

IX

It spak right howe: 'My name is Death,	hollow
But be na' fley'd.' Quoth I: 'Guid faith,	scared
Ye're may be come to stap my breath;	
But tent me, billie:	heed;
I red ye weel, take care o' skaith,	comrade
See, there's a gully!	advise;
	damage
	large knife

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X

blade	'Gudeman,' quo' he, 'put up your whittle, I'm no design'd to try its mettle; But if I did, I wad be kittle
[Notes]	To be mislear'd : I wad na mind it, no that spittle Out-owre my beard.'

XI

give us ; agreed	'Weel, weel !' says I, 'a bargain be't ; Come, gie's your hand, an' say we're gree't ; We'll ease our shanks, an' tak a seat : Come, gie's your news :
road	This while ye hae been monie a gate,
[Notes]	At monie a house.'

XII

cut	'Ay, ay !' quo' he, an' shook his head, 'It's e'en a lang, lang time indeed Sin' I began to nick the thread An' choke the breath : Folk maun do something for their bread, An' sae maun Death.
-----	---

XIII

well-nigh butchering	'Sax thousand years are near-hand fled Sin' I was to the butchering bred,
-------------------------	--

DEATH AND DOCTOR HORNBOOK 195

An' monie a scheme in vain's been laid	
To stap or scar me ;	stop ; scare
Till ane Hornbook's ta'en up the trade,	[Notes]
And faith ! he'll waur me.	worst

XIV

'Ye ken Jock Hornbook i' the clachan ?	[Notes]
Deil mak his king's-hood in a spleuchan !—	[Notes] ; into
He's grown sae weel acquaint wi' <i>Buchan</i>	[Notes]
And ither chaps,	
The weans haud out their fingers laughin,	children
An' pouk my hips.	poke ; buttocks

XV

'See, here's a scythe, an' there's a dart,	
They hae pierc'd monie a gallant heart ;	
But Doctor Hornbook wi' his art	
An' cursed skill,	
Has made them baith no worth a fart,	
Damn'd haet they'll kill !	The devil a one

XVI

'Twas but yestreen, nae farther gane,	gone
I threw a noble throw at ane ;	
Wi' less, I'm sure, I've hundreds slain ;	
But Deil-ma-care !	
It just played dirl on the bane,	went tinkle
But did nae mair.	

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XVII

'Hornbook was by wi' ready art,
An' had sae fortify'd the part,
That when I lookèd to my dart,
 It was sae blunt,
Fient haet o't wad hae pierc'd the heart
 Of a kail-runt.

cabbage-
stalk

XVIII

'I drew my scythe in sic a fury,
I near-hand cowpit wi' my hurry,
But yet the bauld Apothecary
 Withstood the shock :
I might as weel hae try'd a quarry
 O' hard whin-rock.

tumbled

XIX

'Ev'n them he canna get attended,
Altho' their face he ne'er had kend it,
Just shit in a kail-blade an' send it,
 As soon 's he smells 't,
Baith their disease and what will mend it,
 At once he tells 't.

cabbage-leaf

XX

'And then a' doctor's saws and whittles
Of a' dimensions, shapes, an' mettles,

knives



DEATH AND DOCTOR HORNBOOK 197

A' kinds o' boxes, mugs, and bottles,
He's sure to hae ;
Their Latin names as fast he rattles
As A B C.

XXI

' Calces o' fossils, earth, and trees ;
True *sal-marinum* o' the seas ;
The *farina* of beans an' pease,
He has't in plenty ;
Aqua-fontis, what you please,
He can content ye.

XXII

'Forbye some new, uncommon weapons,
Urinus spiritus of capons ;
 Or mite-horn shavings, filings, scrapings,
 Distill'd *per se* ;
Sai'-alkali o' midge-tail-clippings,
 And monie mae.'

more

XIII

'Waes me for Johnie Ged's Hole now,'	[Notes]
Quoth I, 'if that thae news be true!	these
His braw calf-ward whare gowans grew	grazing plot ;
Sae white and bonie,	daisies
Nae doubt they'll rive it wi' the plew :	split
They'll ruin Johnie !'	

XXIV

groaned The creature grain'd an eldritch laugh,
And says : ' Ye nedna yoke the pleugh,
Kirkyards will soon be till'd eneugh,
Tak ye nae fear :
ditch They'll a' be trench'd wi monie a sheugh
In twa-three year.

XXV

straw,
i.e. bed
 ' Whare I kill'd ane, a fair strae death
 By loss o' blood or want o' breath,
 This night I'm free to tak my aith,
 That Hornbook's skill
 cloth
 Has clad a score i' their last claiith
 By drap an' pill.

XXVI

weaver	' An honest wabster to his trade,
fists	Whase wife's twa nieves were scarce weel-
	bred,
	Gat tippence-worth to mend her head,
aching	When it was sair ;
crept quietly	The wife slade cannie to her bed,
	But ne'er spak mair.

XXVII

botts ' A countra laird had taen the batts,
commotion Or some curmurring in his guts,

DEATH AND DOCTOR HORNBOOK 199

His only son for Hornbook sets,
 An' pays him well :
 The lad, for twa guid gimmer-pets, pet-ewes
 Was laird himsel.

XXVIII

' A bonie lass—ye kend her name—
 Some ill-brewn drink had hov'd her wame ; put up ;
 She trusts hersel, to hide the shame, belly
 In Hornbook's care ;
 Horn sent her aff to her lang hame
 To hide it there.

XXIX

' That's just a swatch o' Hornbook's way ; sample
 Thus goes he on from day to day,
 Thus does he poison, kill, an' slay,
 An's weel paid for 't ;
 Yet stops nae o' my lawfu' prey
 Wi' his damn'd dirt :

XXX

' But, hark ! I'll tell you of a plot,
 Tho' dinna ye be speakin o't :
 I'll nail the self-conceited sot,
 As dead's a herrin ;
 Niest time we meet, I'll wad a groat, next ; wager
 He gets his fairin !' [Notes]

XXXI

small ;
beyond
twelve
got us to our
legs

But just as he began to tell,
The auld kirk-hammer strak the bell
Some wee short hour ayont the twal,
Which raised us baith :
I took the way that pleas'd mysel,
And sae did Death.

THE BRIGS OF AYR

A Poem

INSCRIBED TO JOHN BALLANTINE, ESQ., AYR

THE simple Bard, rough at the rustic plough,
Learning his tuneful trade from ev'ry bough
(The chanting linnet, or the mellow thrush,
Hailing the setting sun, sweet, in the green thorn
bush ;
The soaring lark, the perching red-breast shrill,
Or deep-ton'd plovers grey, wild-whistling o'er the
hill) :
Shall he—nurst in the peasant's lowly shed,
To hardy independence bravely bred,
By early poverty to hardship steel'd,
And train'd to arms in stern misfortune's field—
Shall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,
The servile, mercenary Swiss of rhymes ?

Or labour hard the panegyric close,
 With all the venal soul of dedicating prose ?
 No ! though his artless strains he rudely sings,
 And throws his hand uncouthly o'er the strings,
 He glows with all the spirit of the bard,
 Fame, honest fame, his great, his dear reward.
 Still, if some patron's gen'rous care he trace,
 Skill'd in the secret to bestow with grace ;
 When Ballantine befriends his humble name,
 And hands the rustic stranger up to fame,
 With heartfelt throes his grateful bosom swells :
 The godlike bliss, to give, alone excels.

'Twas when the stacks get on their winter hap,
 And thack and rape secure the toil-won crap ;
 Potatoo-bings are snugged up frae skaith
 O' coming winter's biting, frosty breath ;
 The bees, rejoicing o'er their summer toils—
 Unnumber'd buds' an' flowers' delicious spoils,
 Seal'd up with frugal care in massive waxen piles—
 Are doom'd by man, that tyrant o'er the weak,
 The death o' devils smoor'd wi' brimstone reek :
 The thundering guns are heard on ev'ry side,
 The wounded coveys, reeling, scatter wide ;
 The feather'd field-mates, bound by Nature's tie,
 Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie :
 (What warm, poetic heart but inly bleeds,
 And execrates man's savage, ruthless deeds !)

wrap
 thatch ; rope ;
 crop
 heaps ;
 damage

smothered ;
 smoke

202 THE BRIGS OF AYR

small half-grown
 Nae mair the flower in field or meadow springs ;
 Nae mair the grove with airy concert rings,
 Except perhaps the robin's whistling glee,
 Proud o' the height o' some bit half-lang tree ;
 The hoary morns precede the sunny days ;
 Mild, calm, serene, widespreads the noontide
 blaze,
 While thick the gossamour waves wanton in the
 rays.

One
[Notes]
[Notes]
 'Twas in that season, when a simple Bard,
 Unknown and poor—simplicity's reward !—
 Ae night, within the ancient brugh of Ayr,
 By whim inspir'd, or haply prest wi' care,
 He left his bed, and took his wayward route,
 And down by Simpson's wheel'd the left about
 (Whether impell'd by all-directing Fate,
 To witness what I after shall narrate ;
 Or whether, rapt in meditation high,
 He wander'd forth, he knew not where nor why) :
 The drowsy Dungeon-Clock had number'd two,
 And Wallace Tower had sworn the fact was true ;
 The tide-swoln Firth, with sullen-sounding roar,
 Through the still night dash'd hoarse along the
 shore ;
 All else was hush'd as Nature's closèd e'e ;
 The silent moon shone high o'er tower and tree ;
 The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
 Crept, gently-crusting, o'er the glittering stream.

When, lo ! on either hand the list'ning Bard,
 The clanging sugh of whistling wings is heard ; swish
 Two dusky forms dart thro' the midnight air,
 Swift as the gos drives on the wheeling hare ; [Notes]
 Ane on th' Auld Brig his airy shape uprears,
 The ither flutters o'er the rising piers :
 Our warlock rhymmer instantly descried wizard
 The Sprites that owre the Brig's of Ayr preside.
 (That bards are second-sighted is nae joke,
 And ken the lingo of the sp'ritual folk ; know
 Fays, spunkies, kelpies, a', they can explain jack-o'-
 them, lanterns ; water-
 And ev'n the vera deils they brawly ken them). demons know them
 Auld Brig appear'd of ancient Pictish race, well
 The vera wrinkles Gothic in his face ;
 He seem'd as he wi' Time had warstl'd lang, wrestled
 Yet, teughly doure, he bade an unco bang. toughly
 New Brig was buskit in a braw new coat, stubborn
 That he, at Lon'on, frae ane Adams got ; [Notes]
 In's hand five taper staves as smooth's a
 bead,
 Wi' virls an' whirlygigums at the head. rings ;
 The Goth was stalking round with anxious flourishes
 search,
 Spying the time-worn flaws in ev'ry arch.
 It chanc'd his new-come neebor took his e'e,
 And e'en a vex'd and angry heart had he !
 Wi' thieveless sneer to see his modish mien, forbidding
 He, down the water, gies him this guid-eeen :— river

AULD BRIG

[Notes] ' I doubt na, frien', ye'll think ye're nae sheep
shank,
stretched across Ance ye were streekit owre frae bank to bank !
when But gin ye be a brig as auld as me—
wager a farthing Tho' faith, that date, I doubt, ye'll never see—
crotchets There'll be, if that day come, I'll wad a boddle,
Some fewer whigmeleeries in your noddle.'

NEW BRIG

discretion ' Auld Vandal ! ye but show your little mense,
Just much about it wi' your scanty sense :
Will your poor, narrow foot-path of a street,
Where twa wheel-barrows tremble when they meet,
Your ruin'd, formless bulk o' stane an' lime,
Compare wi' bonie brigs o' modern time ?
[Notes] There's men of taste would tak the Ducat stream,
Tho' they should cast the vera sark and swim,
E'er they would grate their feelings wi' the view
O' sic an ugly, Gothic hulk as you.'

AULD BRIG

cuckoo ' Conceited gowk ! puff'd up wi' windy pride !
This monie a year I've stood the flood an' tide ;
eld ; And tho' wi' crazy eild I'm sair forfairn,
worn out
pile of stones I'll be a brig when ye're a shapeless cairn !

THE BRIGS OF AYR 205

As yet ye little ken about the matter,
 But twa-three winters will inform ye better. two or three
 When heavy, dark, continued, a'-day rains day-long
 Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains ;
 When from the hills where springs the brawling Coil,
 Or stately Lugar's mossy fountains boil,
 Or where the Greenock winds his moorland course,
 Or haunted Garpal draws his feeble source, [Notes]
 Arous'd by blustering winds an' spotting thowes, thaws
 In monie a torrent down the snaw-broo rows ; snow-brew
 While crashing ice, borne on the roaring speat, rolls
 Sweeps dams, an' mills, an' brigs, a' to the gate ; flood
 And from Glenbuck down to the Ratton-Key the road
 Auld Ayr is just one lengthen'd, tumbling sea— seaward
 Then down ye'll hurl (deil nor ye never rise !), [Notes]
 And dash the gumlie jaups up to the pouring skies! crash
 A lesson sadly teaching, to your cost, muddy
 That Architecture's noble art is lost !' splashes

NEW BRIG

'Fine architecture, trowth, I needs must say 't o't,
 The Lord be thankit that we've tint the gate o't ! lost the
 Gaunt, ghastly, ghaist-alluring edifices, trick
 Hanging with threat'ning jut, like precipices ;
 O'er-arching, mouldy, gloom-inspiring coves,
 Supporting roofs fantastic—stony groves ;
 Windows and doors in nameless sculptures drest,
 With order, symmetry, or taste unblest ;

206 THE BRIGS OF AYR

Forms like some bedlam statuary's dream,
 The craz'd creations of misguided whim ;
 Forms might be worshipp'd on the bended knee,
 And still the second dread Command be free :
 Their likeness is not found on earth, in air, or sea !
 Mansions that would disgrace the building taste
 Of any mason reptile, bird or beast,
 muddled Fit only for a doited monkish race,
 Or frosty maids forsworn the dear embrace,
 dolts Or cuifs of later times, wha held the notion,
 That sullen gloom was sterling true devotion :
 Fancies that our guid brugh denies protection,
 And soon may they expire, unblest with resur-
 rection!'

AULD BRIG

coevals ' O ye, my dear-remember'd, ancient yealings,
 Were ye but here to share my wounded feelings !
 provosts Ye worthy proveses, an' monie a bailie,
 Wha in the paths o' righteousness did toil ay ;
 sedate Ye dainty deacons, an' ye douce conveners,
 causeway- To whom our moderns are but causey-cleaners ;
 Ye godly councils, wha hae blest this town ;
 Ye godly brethren o' the sacred gown,
 buttocks Wha meekly gie your hurdies to the smiters ;
 And (what would now be strange), ye godly
 Lawyers Writers ;
 sedate ; A' ye douce folk I've borne aboon the broo,
 across ; Were ye but here, what would ye say or do !
 water

How would your spirits groan in deep vexation
 To see each melancholy alteration ;
 And, agonising, curse the time and place
 When ye begat the base degen'rate race !
 Nae langer rev'rend men, their country's glory,
 In plain braid Scots hold forth a plain, braid story ;
 Nae langer thrifty citizens, an' douce,
 Meet owre a pint or in the council-house :
 But staumrel, corky-headed, graceless gentry, half-witted
 The herryment and ruin of the country ; spoliation
 Men three-parts made by tailors and by barbers,
 Wha waste your weel-hain'd gear on damn'd well-saved
 New Brig and harbours !' wealth

NEW BRIG

'Now haud you there ! for faith ye've said enough,
 And muckle mair than ye can mak to through. make good
 As for your priesthood, I shall say but little,
 Corbies and clergy are a shot right kittle : ravens ; sort ;
 But, under favour o' your langer beard, ticklish
 Abuse o' magistrates might weel be spar'd ;
 To liken them to your auld-warld squad,
 I must needs say, comparisons are odd.
 In Ayr, wag-wits nae mair can hae a handle
 To mouth 'a Citizen,' a term o' scandal ;
 Nae mair the council waddles down the street,
 In all the pomp of ignorant conceit ;
 Men wha grew wise priggin owre hops an' raisins, haggling
 Or gather'd lib'ral views in bonds and seisins ;

208 THE BRIGS OF AYR

menaced If haply Knowledge, on a random tramp,
Had shor'd them with a glimmer of his lamp,
And would to common-sense for once betray'd them,
Plain, dull stupidity stept kindly in to aid them.'

nonsense What farther clish-ma-claver might been said,
What bloody wars, if Sprites had blood to shed,
No man can tell ; but, all before their sight,
A fairy train appear'd in order bright :
Adown the glittering stream they featly danc'd ;
Bright to the moon their various dresses glanc'd ;
They footed o'er the wat'ry glass so neat,
The infant ice scarce bent beneath their feet ;
While arts of minstrelsy among them rung,
And soul-ennobling Bards heroic ditties sung.

[Notes]
(cat-)gut- O, had M'Lauchlan, thairm-inspiring sage,
Been there to hear this heavenly band engage,
When thro' his dear strathspeys they bore with
Highland rage ;
Or when they struck old Scotia's melting airs,
The lover's raptured joys or bleeding cares ;
ear How would his Highland lug been nobler fir'd,
And ev'n his matchless hand with finer touch
inspir'd !
No guess could tell what instrument appear'd,
But all the soul of Music's self was heard ;
Harmonious concert rung in every part,
While simple melody pour'd moving on the heart.

The Genius of the Stream in front appears,
 A venerable chief advanc'd in years ;
 His hoary head with water-lilies crown'd,
 His manly leg with garter-tangle bound.
 Next came the loveliest pair in all the ring,
 Sweet Female Beauty hand in hand with Spring ;
 Then, crown'd with flow'ry hay, came Rural
 Joy,
 And Summer, with his fervid-beaming eye ;
 All-cheering Plenty, with her flowing horn,
 Led yellow Autumn wreath'd with nodding
 corn ;
 Then Winter's time-bleach'd locks did hoary
 show,
 By Hospitality, with cloudless brow.
 Next follow'd Courage, with his martial stride,
 From where the Feal wild-woody coverts hide ;
 Benevolence, with mild, benignant air,
 A female form, came from the towers of Stair ;
 Learning and Worth in equal measures trode
 From simple Catrine, their long-lov'd abode ;
 Last, white-rob'd Peace, crown'd with a hazel
 wreath,
 To rustic Agriculture did bequeath
 The broken, iron instruments of death :
 At sight of whom our Sprites forgot their kindling
 wrath.

THE ORDINATION

*For sense, they little owe to frugal Heav'n :
To please the mob they hide the little giv'n.*

I

weavers;
shrug;
scratch
grease
stretch

Haste!

KILMARNOCK wabsters, fidge an' claw,
An' pour your creeshie nations;
An' ye wha leather rax an' draw,
Of a' denominations;
Swith! to the Laigh Kirk, ane an' a',
An' there tak up your stations;
Then aff to Begbie's in a raw,
An' pour divine libations
For joy this day.

II

Curst Common-sense, that imp o' hell,
Cam in wi' *Maggie Lauder* :
But Oliphant aft made her yell,
An' Russell sair misca'd her :

THE ORDINATION

211

This day Mackinlay taks the flail,	
An' he's the boy will blaud her !	slap
He'll clap a shangan on her tail,	cleft stick
An' set the bairns to daud her	pelt
Wi' dirt this day.	

III

Mak haste an' turn King David owre,	
An' lilt wi' holy clangor ;	
O' double verse come gie us four,	[Notes]
An' skirl up the <i>Bangor</i> :	shrill
This day the Kirk kicks up a stoure :	dust
Nae mair the knaves shall wrang her,	
For Heresy is in her pow'r,	
And gloriously she'll whang her	flog
Wi' pith this day.	

IV

Come, let a proper text be read,	
An' touch it aff wi' vigour,	
How graceless Ham leugh at his dad,	<i>Gen. ix. 22</i> laughed
Which made Canaan a nigger ;	
Or Phineas drove the murdering blade	
Wi' whore-abhorring rigour ;	
Or Zipporah, the scauldin jad,	<i>Ex. iv. 25</i>
Was like a bluidy tiger	
I' th' inn that day.	

V

There, try his mettle on the Creed,
 And bind him down wi' caution,—
 That stipend is a carnal weed
 He taks but for the fashion—
 And gie him o'er the flock to feed,
 And punish each transgression ;
 Especial, rams that cross the breed,
 Gie them sufficient threshin :
 Spare them nae day.

VI

	Now auld Kilmarnock, cock thy tail,
joyful	An' toss thy horns fu' canty ;
low	Nae mair thou'lt rowte out-owre the dale,
	Because thy pasture's scanty ;
broth	For lapfu's large o' gospel kail
	Shall fill thy crib in plenty,
stalks; choice	An' runts o' grace, the pick an' wale,
	No gien by way o' dainty,
every	But ilka day.

VII

	Nae mair by Babel's streams we'll weep
	To think upon our Zion ;
	And hing our fiddles up to sleep,
cloths	Like baby-clouts a-dryin'

Come, screw the pegs wi' tunefu' cheep,
 And o'er the thairms be tryin ;
 O, rare ! to see our elbucks wheep,
 And a' like lamb-tails flyin
 Fu' fast this day !

strings
 elbows
 jerk

VIII

Lang, Patronage, wi' rod o' airn,
 Has shor'd the Kirk's undoin ;
 As lately Fenwick, sair forfairn,
 Has proven to its ruin :
 Our patron, honest man ! Glencairn,
 He saw mischief was brewin ;
 An' like a godly, elect bairn,
 He's waled us out a true ane,
 And sound this day.

iron
 threatened
 forlorn

chosen

IX

Now Robertson harangue nae mair,
 But steek your gab for ever ;
 Or try the wicked town of Ayr,
 For there they'll think you clever ;
 Or, nae reflection on your lear,
 Ye may commence a shaver ;
 Or to the Netherton repair,
 An' turn a carpet-weaver
 Aff-hand this day.

shut ; mouth

learning
 set up for a
 barber

X

The Devil
cat

Mu'trie and you were just a match,
 We never had sic twa drones :
 Auld Hornie did the Laigh Kirk watch,
 Just like a winkin baudrons,
 And ay he catch'd the tither wretch,
 To fry them in his caudrons ;
 But now his Honor ma'un detach,
 Wi' a' his brimstone squadrons,
 Fast, fast this day.

XI

foes
flogging
mighty

See, see auld Orthodoxy's faes
 She's swingein thro' the city !
 Hark, how the nine-tail'd cat she plays !
 I vow it's unco pretty :
 There, Learning, with his Greekish face,
 Grunts out some Latin ditty ;
 And Common-Sense is gaun, she says,
 To mak to Jamie Beattie
 Her plaint this day.

XII

But there's Morality himsel,
 Embracing all opinions ;
 Hear, how he gies the tither yell
 Between his twa companions !

THE ORDINATION

215

See, how she peels the skin an' fell,
As ane were peelin onions !
Now there, they're packèd aff to hell,
An' banish'd our dominions,
Henceforth this day.

flesh under
the skin

XIII

O happy day ! rejoice, rejoice !
Come bouse about the porter !
Morality's demure decoys
Shall here nae mair find quarter :
Mackinlay, Russell, are the boys
That Heresy can torture ;
They'll gie her on a rape a hoyse,
And cove her measure shorter
By th' head some day.

rope ; hoist
crop

XIV

Come, bring the tither mutchkin in,
And here's—for a conclusion—
To ev'ry New Light mother's son,
From this time forth, confusion !
If mair they deave us wi' their din
Or patronage intrusion,
We'll light a spunk, and ev'ry skin
We'll run them aff in fusion,
Like oil some day.

pint

[Notes]

deafen

match

THE CALF

*To the Rev. James Steven, on his text, MALACHI iv. 2 :—
 'And ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.'*

I

RIGHT, sir ! your text I'll prove it true,
 Tho' heretics may laugh ;
 For instance, there's yoursel just now,
 God knows, an unco *calf*.

uncommon

II

And should some patron be so kind
 As bless you wi' a kirk,
 I doubt na, sir, but then we'll find
 You're still as great a *stirk*.

yearling

III

But, if the lover's raptur'd hour
 Shall ever be your lot,
 Forbid it, every heavenly Power,
 You e'er should be a *stot* !

ox

IV

Tho', when some kind connubial dear
 Your but-an'-ben adorns,
 The like has been that you may wear
 A noble head of *horn*.

[Notes]

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID 217

V

And, in your lug, most reverend James,	car
To hear you roar and rowte,	low
Few men o' sense will doubt your claims	
To rank among the <i>nowte</i> .	cattle

VI

And when ye 're number'd wi' the dead
 Below a grassy hillock,
 With justice they may mark your head :—
 ' Here lies a famous *bullock* !'

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID

OR THE RIGIDLY RIGHTEOUS

<i>My Son, these maxims make a rule,</i>	
<i>An' lump them ay thegither :</i>	
<i>The Rigid Righteous is a fool,</i>	
<i>The Rigid Wise anither ;</i>	
<i>The cleanest corn that e'er was dight</i>	sifted
<i>May hae some pyles o' caff in ;</i>	chaff
<i>So ne'er a fellow-creature slight</i>	
<i>For random fits o' daffin.</i>	larking

SOLOMON (*Eccles.* vii. 16).

I

O YE, wha are sae guid yoursel,
 Sae pious and sae holy,
 Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
 Your neebours' fauts and folly ;

218 ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID

well-going	Whase life is like a weel-gaun mill,
	Supplied wi' store o' water ;
hopper	The heapet happer 's ebbing still,
clapper	An' still the clap plays clatter !

II

company	Hear me, ye venerable core,
	As counsel for poor mortals
sober	That frequent pass douce Wisdom's door
giddy	For glaikit Folly's portals :
	I for their thoughtless, careless sakes
put forward	Would here propone defences—
restive	Their donsie tricks, their black mistakes,
	Their failings and mischances.

III

	Ye see your state wi' theirs compared,
exchange	And shudder at the niffer ;
	But cast a moment's fair regard,
	What makes the mighty differ ?
	Discount what scant occasion gae ;
	That purity ye pride in ;
rest	And (what 's aft mair than a' the lave)
	Your better art o' hidin.

IV

	Think, when your castigated pulse
	Gies now and then a wallop,
	What ragings must his veins convulse,
	That still eternal gallop !

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID 219

Wi' wind and tide fair i' your tail,
Right on ye scud your sea-way ;
But in the teeth o' baith to sail,
It maks an unco lee-way.

uncommon

V

See Social-life and Glee sit down
All joyous and unthinking,
Till, quite transmugrify'd, they're grown
Debauchery and Drinking :
O, would they stay to calculate,
Th' eternal consequences,
Or—your more dreaded hell to state—
Damnation of expenses !

VI

Ye high, exalted, virtuous dames,
Tied up in godly laces,
Before ye gie poor Frailty names,
Suppose a change o' cases :
A dear-lov'd lad, convenience snug,
A treach'rous inclination—
But, let me whisper i' your lug,
Ye're aiblins nae temptation.

ear

maybe

VII

Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman ;
Tho' they may gang a kennin wrang,
To step aside is human :

[Notes]

220 TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY

One point must still be greatly dark,
The moving *why* they do it ;
And just as lamely can ye mark
How far perhaps they rue it.

VIII

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
Decidedly can try us :
He knows each chord, its various tone,
Each spring, its various bias :
Then at the balance let's be mute,
We never can adjust it ;
What's done we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted.

TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY

An honest man's the noblest work of God.
POPE.

I

	HAs auld Kilmarnock seen the Deil ?
[Notes]	Or great Mackinlay thrawn his heel ?
[Notes]	Or Robertson again grown weel
	To preach an' read ?
worse ;	' Na, waur than a' ! ' cries ilka chiel,
everybody	' Tam Samson 's dead ! '

II

groan	Kilmarnock lang may grunt an' grane,
weep alone	An' sigh, an' sab, an' greet her lane,

TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY 221

An' cleed her bairns—man, wife an' wean—	clothe; child
In mourning weed;	
To Death she's dearly pay'd the kain:	rent in kind
Tam Samson's dead!	

III

The Brethren o' the mystic level	
May hing their head in woefu' bevel,	slope
While by their nose the tears will revel,	
Like onie bead;	
Death's gien the Lodge an unco devel:	stunning
Tam Samson's dead!	blow

IV

When Winter muffles up his cloak,	
And binds the mire like a rock;	
When to the loughs the curlers flock,	ponds
Wi' gleesome speed,	
Wha will they station at the cock?—	mark
Tam Samson's dead!	

V

He was the king of a' the core,	company
To guard, or draw, or wick a bore,	[Notes]
Or up the rink like Jehu roar	
In time o' need;	
But now he lags on Death's hog-score:	[Notes]
Tam Samson's dead!	

222 TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY

VI

salmon	Now safe the stately sawmont sail,
	And trouts bedropp'd wi' crimson hail,
	And eels, weel-kend for souple tai,
pikes	And geds for greed,
	Since, dark in Death's fish-creel, we wail
	Tam Samson dead !

VII

partridges	Rejoice, ye birring pairtricks a' ;
leg-plumed ;	Ye cootie moorcocks, crouselly craw ;
confidently	Ye maukins, cock your fud fu' braw
hares ; tail	Withouten dread ;
	Your mortal fae is now awa :
	Tam Samson's dead !

VIII

	That woefu' morn be ever mourn'd,
attire	Saw him in shootin graith adorn'd,
	While pointers round impatient burn'd,
leashes	Frae couples free'd ;
	But och ! he gaed and ne'er return'd :
	Tam Samson's dead.

IX

In vain auld-age his body batters,
In vain the gout his ancles fetters,

TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY 223

In vain the burns cam down like waters,	brooks ;
An acre braid !	lakes
Now ev'ry auld wife, greetin, clatters :	weeping
'Tam Samson's dead !'	

X

Owre monie a weary hag he limpit,	moor
An' ay the tither shot he thumpit,	
Till coward Death behint him jumpit,	
Wi' deadly feide ;	feud
Now he proclaims wi' tout o' trumpet :	blast
'Tam Samson's dead !'	

XI

When at his heart he felt the dagger,
 He reel'd his wonted bottle-swagger,
 But yet he drew the mortal trigger
 Wi' weel-aim'd heed ;
 'Lord, five !' he cry'd, an' owre did stagger—
 Tam Samson's dead !

XII

Ilk hoary hunter mourn'd a brither ;	Each
Ilk sportsman-youth bemoan'd a father ;	
Yon auld gray stane, amang the heather,	
Marks out his head ;	
Whare Burns has wrote, in rhyming blether :	babble
'Tam Samson's dead !'	

There low he lies in lasting rest ;
Perhaps upon his mould'ring breast
Some spitefu' moorfowl bigs her nest,
To hatch an' breed :
Alas ! nae mair he'll them molest :
Tam Samson's dead !

When August winds the heather wave,
And sportsmen wander by yon grave,
Three volleys let his memory crave
O' pouter an' lead,
Till Echo answers frae her cave :
'Tam Samson's dead !'

NOTE

'Heav'n rest his saul whare'er he be !'
Is th' wish o' monie mae than me :
He had twa fauts, or maybe three,
Yet what remead ?
Ae social, honest man want we :
Tam Samson's dead !

[Notes]

Tam Samson's weel-worn clay here lies :
Ye canting zealots, spare him !
If honest worth in Heaven rise,
Ye'll mend or ye win near him.

PER CONTRA

Go, Fame, an' canter like a filly
 Thro' a' the streets an neuks o' Killie ; [Notes]
 Tell ev'ry social honest billie fellow
 To cease his grievin ;
 For, yet unskait'h'd by Death's gleg gullie, quick knife
 Tam Samson's leevin !

A WINTER NIGHT

*Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
 That bide the pelting of this pityless storm !
 How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
 Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
 From seasons such as these ?*

SHAKESPEARE.

I
 WHEN biting Boreas, fell and doure, cruel ; ~~but~~
 Sharp shivers thro' the leafless bow'r ;
 When Phœbus gies a short-liv'd glow'r, stare
 Far south the lift, horizon
 Dim-dark'ning thro' the flaky show'r
 Or whirling drift :

II

Ae night the storm the steeples rocked ; One
 Poor Labour sweet in sleep was locked ;
 While burns, wi' snawy wreaths up-choked, brooks
 Wild-eddying swirl,
 Or, thro' the mining outlet bocked, vomited
 Down headlong hurl :

III

windows	List'ning the doors an' winnocks rattle,
shivering	I thought me on the ourie cattle,
helpless	Or silly sheep, wha bide this brattle
	O' winter war,
scramble	And thro the drift, deep-lairing, sprattle
jutting rock	Beneath a scaur.

IV

Each	Ilk happing bird—wee, helpless thing!—
	That in the merry months o' spring
	Delighted me to hear thee sing,
	What comes o' thee?
	Whare wilt thou cow'r thy chittering wing,
	An' close thy e'e?

V

	Ev'n you, on murd'ring errands toil'd,
	Lone from your savage homes exil'd,
	The blood-stain'd roost and sheep-cote spoil'd
	My heart forgets,
	While pityless the tempest wild
	Sore on you beats!

VI

	Now Phœbe, in her midnight reign,
	Dark-muff'd, view'd the dreary plain;

Still crowding thoughts, a pensive train,
 Rose in my soul,
When on my ear this plaintive strain,
 Slow-solemn, stole :—

VII

‘ Blow, blow, ye winds, with heavier gust !
And freeze, thou bitter-biting frost !
Descend, ye chilly, smothering snows !
Not all your rage, as now united, shows
 More hard unkindness unrelenting,
 Vengeful malice, unrepenting,
Than heaven-illumin’d Man on brother Man
 bestows !
See stern Oppression’s iron grip,
 Or mad Ambition’s gory hand,
Sending, like blood-hounds from the slip,
 Woe, Want, and Murder o’er a land !
Ev’n in the peaceful rural vale,
Truth, weeping, tells the mournful tale :
How pamper’d Luxury, Flatt’ry by her side,
 The parasite empoisoning her ear,
 With all the servile wretches in the rear,
Looks o’er proud Property, extended wide ;
And eyes the simple, rustic hind,
 Whose toil upholds the glitt’ring show—
A creature of another kind,
 Some coarser substance, unrefin’d—
Plac’d for her lordly use, thus far, thus vile, below !

Where, where is Love's fond, tender throe,
With lordly Honor's lofty brow,
The pow'rs you proudly own ?
Is there, beneath Love's noble name,
Can harbour, dark, the selfish aim,
To bless himself alone ?
Mark Maiden-Innocence a prey
To love-pretending snares :
This boasted Honor turns away,
Shunning soft Pity's rising sway,
Regardless of the tears and unavailing pray'rs !
Perhaps this hour, in Misery's squalid nest,
She strains your infant to her joyless breast,
And with a mother's fears shrinks at the rocking
blast !

VIII

' O ye ! who, sunk in beds of down,
Feel not a want but what yourselves create,
Think, for a moment, on his wretched fate,
Whom friends and fortune quite disown !
Ill-satisfy'd keen nature's clam'rous call,
Stretch'd on his straw, he lays himself to sleep ;
While through the ragged roof and chinky wall,
Chill, o'er his slumbers piles the drifty heap !
Think on the dungeon's grim confine,
Where Guilt and poor Misfortune pine !
Guilt, erring man, relenting view !
But shall thy legal rage pursue

STANZAS IN PROSPECT OF DEATH 229

The wretch, already crushèd low
By cruel Fortune's undeservèd blow ?
Affliction's sons are brothers in distress ;
A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss !'

IX

I heard nae mair, for Chanticleer
Shook off the pouthery snaw, powdery
And hail'd the morning with a cheer,
A cottage-rousing crow.

But deep this truth impress'd my mind :
Thro' all His works abroad,
The heart benevolent and kind
The most resembles God.

STANZAS WRITTEN IN PROSPECT
OF DEATH

I

WHY am I loth to leave this earthly scene ?
Have I so found it full of pleasing charms ?
Some drops of joy with draughts of ill between ;
Some gleams of sunshine mid renewing storms.

230 STANZAS IN PROSPECT OF DEATH

Is it departing pangs my soul alarms ?
Or death's unlovely, dreary, dark abode ?
For guilt, for guilt, my terrors are in arms :
I tremble to approach an angry God,
And justly smart beneath his sin-avenging rod.

II

Fain would I say : ' Forgive my foul offence,'
Fain promise never more to disobey.
But should my Author health again dispense,
Again I might desert fair virtue's way ;
Again in folly's path might go astray ;
Again exalt the brute and sink the man :
Then how should I for heavenly mercy pray,
Who act so counter heavenly mercy's plan ?
Who sin so oft have mourn'd, yet to temptation
ran ?

III

O Thou great Governor of all below !—
If I may dare a lifted eye to Thee,—
Thy nod can make the tempest cease to blow,
Or still the tumult of the raging sea :
With that controlling pow'r assist ev'n me
Those headlong furious passions to confine,
For all unfit I feel my pow'rs to be
To rule their torrent in th' allowed line :
O, aid me with Thy help, Omnipotence Divine !

PRAYER: O THOU DREAD POWER

*Lying at a reverend friend's house one night the author
left the following verses in the room where he slept.*

I

O Thou dread Power, who reign'st above,
I know thou wilt me hear,
When for this scene of peace and love
I make my prayer sincere.

II

The hoary Sire—the mortal stroke,
Long, long be pleas'd to spare :
To bless his little filial flock,
And show what good men are.

III

She, who her lovely offspring eyes
With tender hopes and fears—
O, bless her with a mother's joys,
But spare a mother's tears !

IV

Their hope, their stay, their darling youth,
In manhood's dawning blush,
Bless him, Thou God of love and truth,
Up to a parent's wish.

232 PARAPHRASE OF THE FIRST PSALM

v

The beauteous, seraph sister-band—
With earnest tears I pray—
Thou know'st the snares on every hand,
Guide Thou their steps alway.

vi

When, soon or late, they reach that coast,
O'er Life's rough ocean driven,
May they rejoice, no wand'rer lost,
A family in Heaven !

PARAPHRASE OF THE FIRST PSALM

i

THE man, in life wherever plac'd,
Hath happiness in store,
Who walks not in the wicked's way
Nor learns their guilty lore ;

ii

Nor from the seat of scornful pride
Casts forth his eyes abroad,
But with humility and awe
Still walks before his God !

PRAYER UNDER VIOLENT ANGUISH 238

III

That man shall flourish like the trees,
Which by the streamlets grow :
The fruitful top is spread on high,
And firm the root below.

IV

But he, whose blossom buds in guilt,
Shall to the ground be cast,
And, like the rootless stubble, tost
Before the sweeping blast.

V

For why ? that God the good adore
Hath giv'n them peace and rest,
But hath decreed that wicked men
Shall ne'er be truly blest.

PRAYER UNDER THE PRESSURE OF
VIOLENT ANGUISH

I

O Thou Great Being ! what Thou art
Surpasses me to know ;
Yet sure I am, that known to Thee
Are all Thy works below.

234 NINETIETH PSALM VERSIFIED

II

Thy creature here before Thee stands,
All wretched and distress ;
Yet sure those ills that wring my soul
Obey Thy high behest.

III

Sure Thou, Almighty, canst not act
From cruelty or wrath !
O, free my weary eyes from tears,
Or close them fast in death !

IV

But, if I must afflicted be
To suit some wise design,
Then man my soul with firm resolves
To bear and not repine !

THE NINETIETH PSALM VERSIFIED

I

O Thou, the first, the greatest friend
Of all the human race !
Whose strong right hand has ever been
Their stay and dwelling place !

NINETIETH PSALM VERSIFIED 235

II

Before the mountains heav'd their heads
Beneath Thy forming hand,
Before this ponderous globe itself
Arose at Thy command :

III

That Power, which rais'd and still upholds
This universal frame,
From countless, unbeginning time
Was ever still the same.

IV

Those mighty periods of years,
Which seem to us so vast,
Appear no more before Thy sight
Than yesterday that's past.

V

Thou giv'st the word : Thy creature, man,
Is to existence brought ;
Again Thou say'st : ' Ye sons of men,
Return ye into nought !'

VI

Thou layest them, with all their cares,
In everlasting sleep ;
As with a flood Thou tak'st them off
With overwhelming sweep.

VII

They flourish like the morning flower
 In beauty's pride array'd,
 But long ere night, cut down, it lies
 All wither'd and decay'd.

TO MISS LOGAN

WITH BEATTIE'S POEMS FOR A NEW YEAR'S GIFT

JANUARY 1, 1787

I

AGAIN the silent wheels of time
 Their annual round have driv'n,
 And you, tho' scarce in maiden prime,
 Are so much nearer Heav'n.

II

No gifts have I from Indian coasts
 The infant year to hail ;
 I send you more than India boasts
 In Edwin's simple tale.

III

Our sex with guile, and faithless love,
 Is charg'd—perhaps too true ;
 But may, dear maid, each lover prove
 An Edwin still to you.

ADDRESS TO A HAGGIS 237

ADDRESS TO A HAGGIS

I

Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,	jolly
Great chieftain o' the puddin-race !	
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,	Above
Painch, tripe, or thairm :	Paunch ;
Weel are ye wordy of a grace	small guts
As lang's my arm.	

II

The groaning trencher there ye fill,	
Your hurdies like a distant hill,	buttocks
Your pin wad help to mend a mill	skewer
In time o' need,	
While thro' your pores the dews distil	
Like amber bead.	

III

His knife see rustic Labour dight,	wipe
An' cut ye up wi' ready slight,	skill
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,	
Like onie ditch ;	
And then, O what a glorious sight,	
Warm-reekin, rich !	

IV

spoon	Then, horn for horn, they stretch an' strive :
	Deil tak the hindmost, on they drive,
bellies ; by- and-bye	Till a' their weel-swallow'd kytes belyve
	Are bent like drums ;
burnt	Then auld Guidman, maist like to rive,
	'Bethankit !' hums.

V

sicken	Is there that owre his French <i>ragout</i> ,
	Or <i>olio</i> that wad staw a sow,
	Or <i>fricassee</i> wad mak her spew
disgust	Wi' perfect sconner,
	Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view
	On sic a dinner?

VI

weak ; rash	Poor devil ! see him owre his trash,
	As feckless as a wither'd rash,
	His spindle shank a guid whip-lash,
fist ; nut	His nieve a nit ;
	Thro' bluidy flood or field to dash,
	O how unfit !

VII

But mark the Rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH 239

Clap in his walee nieve a blade, ample
He'll make it whistle ;
An' legs, an' arms, an' heads will sned crop
Like taps o' thrissle.

VIII

Ye Pow'rs, wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware,
That jaups in luggies ;
But, if ye wish her gratefu' prayer,
Gie her a Haggis !

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH

I

EDINA ! Scotia's darling seat :
 All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
 Where once, beneath a Monarch's feet,
 Sat Legislation's sov'reign pow'rs :
 From marking wildly-scatt' red flow'rs,
 As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
 And singing, lone, the ling'ring hours,
 I shelter in thy honor'd shade.

240 ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH

II

Here Wealth still swells the golden tide,
As busy Trade his labours plies ;
There Architecture's noble pride
Bids elegance and splendour rise :
Here Justice, from her native skies,
High wields her balance and her rod ;
There Learning, with his eagle eyes,
Seeks Science in her coy abode.

III

Thy sons, Edina, social, kind,
With open arms the stranger hail ;
Their views enlarg'd, their lib'ral mind,
Above the narrow, rural vale ;
Attentive still to Sorrow's wail,
Or modest Merit's silent claim :
And never may their sources fail !
And never Envy blot their name !

IV

Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn,
Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy, milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptur'd thrill of joy !
Fair Burnet strikes th' adoring eye,
Heav'n's beauties on my fancy shine :
I see the Sire of Love on high,
And own His work indeed divine !

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH 241

V

There, watching high the least alarms,
Thy rough, rude fortress gleams afar ;
Like some bold vet'ran, grey in arms,
And mark'd with many a seamy scar :
The pond'rous wall and massy bar,
Grim-rising o'er the rugged rock,
Have oft withstood assailing war,
And oft repell'd th' invader's shock.

VI

With awe-struck thought and pitying tears,
I view that noble, stately dome,
Where Scotia's kings of other years,
Fam'd heroes ! had their royal home :
Alas, how chang'd the times to come !
Their royal name low in the dust !
Their hapless race wild-wand'ring roam !
Tho' rigid Law cries out : 'Twas just '

VII

Wild beats my heart to trace your steps,
Whose ancestors, in days of yore,
Thro' hostile ranks and ruin'd gaps
Old Scotia's bloody lion bore :
Ev'n I, who sing in rustic lore,
Haply my sires have left their shed,
And fac'd grim Danger's loudest roar,
Bold-following where your fathers led !

242 ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH

VIII

Edina ! Scotia's darling seat !

All hail thy palaces and tow'rs ;
Where once, beneath a Monarch's feet,
Sat Legislation's sov'reign pow'rs :
From marking wildly-scatt' red flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the ling'ring hours,
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

SONGS

JOHN BARLEYCORN

A Ballad

I

THERE was three kings into the east,
Three kings both great and high,
And they hae sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn should die.

II

They took a plough and plough'd him down,
Put clods upon his head,
And they hae sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn was dead.

III

But the cheerful Spring came kindly on,
And show'rs began to fall ;
John Barleycorn got up again,
And sore surpris'd them all.

IV

The sultry suns of Summer came,
And he grew thick and strong :
His head weel arm'd wi' pointed spears,
That no one should him wrong.

V

The sober Autumn enter'd mild,
When he grew wan and pale ;
His bending joints and drooping head
Show'd he began to fail.

VI

His colour sicken'd more and more,
He faded into age ;
And then his enemies began
To show their deadly rage.

VII

They've taen a weapon long and sharp,
And cut him by the knee ;
Then ty'd him fast upon a cart,
Like a rogue for forgerie.

VIII

They laid him down upon his back,
And cudgell'd him full sore.
They hung him up before the storm,
And turn'd him o'er and o'er.

IX

They fillèd up a darksome pit
With water to the brim,
They heavèd in John Barleycorn—
There, let him sink or swim !

X

They laid him out upon the floor,
To work him farther woe ;
And still, as signs of life appear'd,
They toss'd him to and fro.

XI

They wasted o'er a scorching flame
The marrow of his bones ;
But a miller us'd him worst of all,
For he crush'd him between two stones.

XII

And they hae taen his very heart's blood,
And drank it round and round ;
And still the more and more they drank,
Their joy did more abound.

XIII

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,
Of noble enterprise ;
For if you do but taste his blood,
'Twill make your courage rise.

246 WHEN GUILFORD GOOD

XIV

'Twill make a man forget his woe ;
'Twill heighten all his joy :
'Twill make the widow's heart to sing,
Tho' the tear were in her eye.

XV

Then let us toast John Barleycorn,
Each man a glass in hand ;
And may his great posterity
Ne'er fail in old Scotland !

A FRAGMENT: WHEN GUILFORD
GOOD

TUNE: *Gillicrankie*

I

helm turn

ten-pox

dash

WHEN Guilford good our pilot stood,
An' did our hellim thrav, man ;
Ae night, at tea, began a plea,
Within Americà, man :
Then up they gat the maskin-pat,
And in the sea did jaw, man ;
An' did nae less, in full Congress,
Than quite refuse our law, man.

II

Then thro' the lakes Montgomery takes,

I wat he was na slaw, man ;

Down Lowrie's Burn he took a turn,

And Carleton did ca', man :

But yet, whatreck, he at Quebec

what matter

Montgomery-like did fa', man,

Wi' sword in hand, before his band,

Amang his en'mies a', man.

III

Poor Tammy Gage within a cage

Was kept at Boston-ha', man ;

Till Willie Howe took o'er the knowe

hill

For Philadelphia, man ;

Wi' sword an' gun he thought a sin

Guid Christian bluid to draw, man ;

But at New-York wi' knife an' fork

Sir-Loin he hacked sma', man.

IV

Burgoyne gaed up, like spur an' whip,

Till Fraser brave did fa', man ;

Then lost his way, ae misty day,

In Saratoga shaw, man.

wood

Cornwallis fought as lang 's he dought,

An' did the buckskins claw, man ;

could
[Notes]

But Clinton's glaive frae rust to save,

He hung it to the wa', man.

V

obstinate;
fight
thwart

let loose

Then Montague, an' Guilford too,
 Began to fear a fa', man;
 And Sackville doure, wha stood the stoure
 The German chief to thrav, man:
 For Paddy Burke, like onie Turk,
 Nae mercy had at a', man;
 An' Charlie Fox threw by the box,
 An' lows'd his tinkler jaw, man.

VI

Then Rockingham took up the game,
 Till death did on him ca', man;
 When Shelburne meek held up his cheek,
 Conform to gospel law, man:
 Saint Stephen's boys, wi' jarring noise,
 They did his measures thrav, man;
 For North an' Fox united stocks,
 An' bore him to the wa,' man.

VII

cheers

worst

Then clubs an' hearts were Charlie's cartes:
 He swept the stakes awa', man,
 Till the diamond's ace, of Indian race,
 Led him a sair *faux pas*, man:
 The Saxon lads, wi' loud placads,
 On Chatham's boy did ca', man;
 An' Scotland drew her pipe an' blew:
 'Up, Willie, waur them a', man!'

VIII

Behind the throne then Granville's gone,

A secret word or twa, man ;

While slee Dundas arous'd the class

aly

Be-north the Roman wa', man :

North of

An' Chatham's wraith, in heav'nly graith,

garb

(Inspired bardies saw, man),

Wi' kindling eyes, cry'd : ' Willie, rise !

Would I hae fear'd them a', man ?'

IX

But, word an' blow, North, Fox, and Co.

Gowff'd Willie like a ba', man,

golfed

Till Suthron raise an' coost their claise

rose ; cast ;
clothes

Behind him in a raw, man :

An' Caledon threw by the drone,

bagpipes

An' did her whittle draw, man ;

blade

An' swoor fu' rude, thro' dirt an' bluid,

To mak it guid in law, man.

MY NANIE, O

I

BEHIND yon hills where Lugar flows

'Mang moors an' mosses many, O,

The wintry sun the day has clos'd,

And I'll awa to Nanie, O.

II

western

dark

The westlin wind blows loud an' shill,
 The night's baith mirk and rainy, O ;
 But I'll get my plaid, an' out I'll steal,
 An' owre the hill to Nanie, O.

III

My Nanie's charming, sweet, an' young ;
 Nae artfu' wiles to win ye, O :
 May ill befa' the flattering tongue
 That wad beguile my Nanie, O !

IV

daisy

Her face is fair, her heart is true ;
 As spotless as she's bonie, O,
 The op'ning gowan, wat wi' dew,
 Nae purer is than Nanie, O.

V

A country lad is my degree,
 An' few there be that ken me, O ;
 But what care I how few they be ?
 I'm welcome ay to Nanie, O.

VI

manage ;
carefully

My riches a's my penny-fec,
 An' I maun guide it cannie, O ;
 But warl's gear ne'er troubles me,
 My thoughts are a'—my Nanie, O.

GREEN GROW THE RASHES 251

VI.

Our auld guidman delights to view
His sheep an' kye thrive bonie, O ; kine
But I'm as blythe that hauds his pleugh,
An' has nae care but Nanie, O.

VIII

Come weel, come woe, I care na by ; do not care
I'll tak what Heav'n will send me, O :
Nae ither care in life have I,
But live, an' love my Nanie, O.

GREEN GROW THE RASHES, O

Chorus

Green grow the rashes, O ;
Green grow the rashes, O ;
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
Are spent among the lasses, O.

I

THERE's nought but care on ev'ry han',
In every hour that passes, O :
What signifies the life o' man,
An' 'twere na for the lasses, O.

252 GREEN GROW THE RASHES

II

worldly The war'ly race may riches chase,
 An' riches still may fly them, O ;
 An' tho' at last they catch them fast,
 Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O.

III

quiet But gie me a cannie hour at e'en,
 My arms about my dearie, O,
 worldly An' war'ly cares an' war'ly men
 topey-turvy May a' gae tapsalteerie, O !

IV

grave For you sae douce, ye sneer at this ;
 Ye're nought but senseless asses, O :
 world The wisest man the warl' e'er saw,
 He dearly lov'd the lasses, O.

V

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
 Her noblest work she classes, O :
 Her prentice han' she try'd on man,
 An' then she made the lasses, O.

Chorus

 Green grow the rashes, O ;
 Green grow the rashes, O ;
 The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
 Are spent among the lasses, O.

AGAIN REJOICING NATURE 253

COMPOSED IN SPRING

TUNE : *Johnny's Grey Brooks*

I

AGAIN rejoicing Nature sees
Her robe assume its vernal hues :
Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,
All freshly steep'd in morning dews.

Chorus

And maun I still on Menie doat,
And bear the scorn that's in her e'e ?
For it's jet, jet-black, an' it's like a hawk,
An' it winna let a body be.

II

In vain to me the cowslips blaw,
In vain to me the vi'lets spring ;
In vain to me in glen or shaw,
The mavis and the lintwhite sing. linnet

III

The merry ploughboy cheers his team,
Wi' joy the tentie seedsman stalks ; careful
But life to me's a weary dream,
A dream of aye that never wauks. wakes

254 AGAIN REJOICING NATURE

IV

The wanton coot the water skims,
Among the reeds the ducklings cry,
The stately swan majestic swims,
And ev'ry thing is blest but I.

V

shuts ;
fold-gate

The sheep-herd steeks his faulding slap,
And o'er the moorlands whistles shill ;
Wi' wild, unequal, wand'ring step,
I meet him on the dewy hill.

VI

And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,
Blythe waukens by the daisy's side,
And mounts and sings on flittering wings,
A woe-worn ghaist I hameward glide.

VII

Come winter, with thine angry howl,
And raging, bend the naked tree ;
Thy gloom will soothe my cheerless soul,
When nature all is sad like me !

Chorus

And maun I still on Menie doat,
And bear the scorn tht's in her e'e ?
For it's jet, jet-black, an' it's like a hawk,
An' it winna let a body be.

THE GLOOMY NIGHT IS
GATHERING FAST

TUNE : *Roslin Castle*

I

THE gloomy night is gath'ring fast,
Loud roars the wild inconstant blast ;
Yon murky cloud is filled with rain,
I see it driving o'er the plain ;
The hunter now has left the moor,
The scatt'ered coveys meet secure ;
While here I wander, prest with care,
Along the lonely banks of Ayr.

II

The Autumn mourns her rip'ning corn
By early Winter's ravage torn ;
Across her placid, azure sky,
She sees the scowling tempest fly ;
Chill runs my blood to hear it rave :
I think upon the stormy wave,
Where many a danger I must dare,
Far from the bonie banks of Ayr.

III

'Tis not the surging billows' roar,
'Tis not that fatal, deadly shore ;
Tho' death in ev'ry shape appear,
The wretched have no more to fear :

256 NO CHURCHMAN AM I

But round my heart the ties are bound,
That heart transpierc'd with many a wound ;
These bleed afresh, those ties I tear,
To leave the bonie banks of Ayr.

IV

Farewell, old Coila's hills and dales,
Her heathy moors and winding vales ;
The scenes where wretched Fancy roves,
Pursuing past unhappy loves !
Farewell my friends ! farewell my foes !
My peace with these, my love with those—
The bursting tears my heart declare,
Farewell, my bonie banks of Ayr.

NO CHURCHMAN AM I

TUNE : Prepare, my dear Brethren

I

No churchman am I for to rail and to write,
No statesman nor soldier to plot or to fight,
No sly man of business contriving a snare,
For a big-belly'd bottle's the whole of my care.

II

The peer I don't envy, I give him his bow ;
I scorn not the peasant, tho' ever so low ;
But a club of good fellows, like those that are here,
And a bottle like this, are my glory and care.

III

Here passes the squire on his brother—his horse,
There centum per centum, the cit with his purse,
But see you *The Crown*, how it waves in the air?
There a big-belly'd bottle still eases my care.

IV

The wife of my bosom, alas! she did die;
For sweet consolation to church I did fly;
I found that old Solomon provèd it fair,
That a big-belly'd bottle's a cure for all care.

V

I once was persuaded a venture to make;
A letter inform'd me that all was to wreck;
But the pury old landlord just waddlèd up stairs,
With a glorious bottle that ended my cares.

VI

'Life's cares they are comforts'—a maxim laid down
By the Bard, what d'ye call him? that wore the
black gown;
And faith I agree with th' old prig to a hair:
For a big-belly'd bottle's a heav'n of a care.

A STANZA ADDED IN A MASON LODGE

Then fill up a bumper and make it o'erflow,
And honours Masonic prepare for to throw:
May ev'ry true Brother of the Compass and Square
Have a big-belly'd bottle, when harass'd with care!

ADDED, EDINBURGH 1793

WRITTEN IN FRIARS CARSE HERMITAGE, ON NITHSIDE

THOU whom chance may hither lead,
Be thou clad in russet weed,
Be thou deckt in silken stole,
Grave these counsels on thy soul.

Life is but a day at most,
Sprung from night,—in darkness lost :
Hope not sunshine ev'ry hour,
Fear not clouds will always lour.

As Youth and Love with sprightly dance
Beneath thy morning star advance,
Pleasure with her siren air
May delude the thoughtless pair :
Let Prudence bless Enjoyment's cup,
Then raptur'd sip, and sip it up.

As thy day grows warm and high,
Life's meridian flaming nigh,



Painted by Alexander Ainsmyth

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Dost thou spurn the humble vale ?
 Life's proud summits would'st thou scale ?
 Check thy climbing step, elate,
 Evils lurk in felon wait :
 Dangers, eagle-pinioned, bold,
 Soar around each cliffy hold ;
 While cheerful Peace with linnet song
 Chants the lowly dells among.

As the shades of ev'ning close,
 Beck'ning thee to long repose ;
 As life itself becomes disease,
 Seek the chimney-nook of ease :
 There ruminate with sober thought,
 On all thou 'st seen, and heard, and wrought ;
 And teach the sportive youngsters round,
 Saws of experience, sage and sound :
 Say, man's true, genuine estimate,
 The grand criterion of his fate,
 Is not, Art thou high or low ?
 Did thy fortune ebb or flow ?
 Did many talents gild thy span ?
 Or frugal Nature grudge thee one ?
 Tell them, and press it on their mind,
 As thou thyself must shortly find,
 The smile or frown of awful Heav'n
 To Virtue or to Vice is giv'n ;
 Say, to be just, and kind, and wise—
 There solid self-enjoyment lies ;

260 ODE, SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF

That foolish, selfish, faithless ways
Lead to be wretched, vile, and base.

Thus resign'd and quiet, creep
To the bed of lasting sleep :
Sleep, whence thou shall ne'er awake,
Night, where dawn shall never break ;
Till future life, future no more,
To light and joy the good restore,
To light and joy unknown before.

Stranger, go ! Heav'n be thy guide !
Quod the beadsman of Nithside.

ODE, SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
MRS. OSWALD OF AUCHENCRAIG

DWELLER in yon dungeon dark,
Hangman of creation, mark !
Who in widow-weeds appears,
Laden with unhonoured years,
Noosing with care a bursting purse,
Baited with many a deadly curse ?

STROPHE

View the wither'd beldam's face :
Can thy keen inspection trace
Aught of Humanity's sweet, melting grace ?

MRS. OSWALD OF AUCHENCROVE 261

Note that eye, 'tis rheum o'erflows—
Pity's flood there never rose.
See those hands, ne'er stretch'd to save,
Hands that took, but never gave.
Keeper of Mammon's iron chest,
Lo, there she goes, unpitied and unblest,
She goes, but not to realms of everlasting rest !

ANTISTROPHE

Plunderer of Armies ! lift thine eyes
 (A while forbear, ye torturing fiends),
Seest thou whose step, unwilling, hither bends ?
No fallen angel, hurl'd from upper skies !
 'Tis thy trusty, quondam Mate,
 Doom'd to share thy fiery fate :
 She, tardy, hell-ward plies.

EPODE

And are they of no more avail,
Ten thousand glittering pounds a-year ?
 In other worlds can Mammon fail,
 Omnipotent as he is here ?
O bitter mockery of the pompous bier !
 While down the wretched vital part is driven,
The cave-lodg'd beggar, with a conscience clear,
 Expires in rags, unknown, and goes to Heaven.

ELEGY ON CAPTAIN MATTHEW
HENDERSON

A GENTLEMAN WHO HELD THE PATENT FOR HIS
HONOURS IMMEDIATELY FROM ALMIGHTY GOD !

*But now his radiant course is run,
For Matthew's course was bright :
His soul was like the glorious sun
A matchless, Heavenly light.*

I

great ; halter
Trail ; smithy
hedgehog
anvil

O DEATH ! thou tyrant fell and bloody !
The meikle Devil wi' a woodie
Haur! thee hame to his black smiddie
O'er hurcheon hides,
And like stock-fish come o'er his studdie
Wi' thy auld sides !

II

gone
one

He's gane, he's gane ! he's frae us torn,
The ae best fellow e'er was born !
Thee, Matthew, Nature's sel shall mourn,
By wood and wild,
Where, haply, Pity strays forlorn,
Frae man exil'd.

III

stars
mounds

Ye hills, near neebors o' the starns,
That proudly cock your cresting cairns !



MATTHEW HENDERSON 263

Ye cliffs, the haunts of sailing years,
Where Echo slumbers!
Come join ye, Nature's sturdiest bairns,
My wailing numbers!

eagles

IV

Mourn, ilka grove the cushat kens!
Ye hazly shaws and briery dens!
Ye burnies, wimplin down your glens
Wi' toddlin din,
Or foaming, strang, wi' hasty stens,
Frae lin to lin!

every

woods

brooklets,
winding

purling

quick leaps

fall

V

Mourn, little harebells o'er the lea;
Ye stately foxgloves, fair to see;
Ye woodbines, hanging bonilie
In sceited bowers;
Ye roses on your thorny tree,
The first o' flowers!

VI

At dawn, when every grassy blade
Droops with a diamond at his head;
At ev'n, when beans their fragrance shed
I' th' rustling gale;
Ye maukins, whiddin through the glade;
Come join my wail!

hares,
scudding

264 ELEGY ON CAPTAIN

VII

	Mourn, ye wee songsters o' the wood ;
	Ye grouse that crap the heather bud ;
cloud	Ye curlews, calling thro' a clud ;
	Ye whistling plover ;
partridge	And mourn, ye whirring paitrick brood :
	He's gane for ever !

VIII

	Mourn, sooty coots, and speckled teals ;
	Ye fisher herons, watching eels ;
	Ye duck and drake, wi' airy wheels
	Circling the lake ;
	Ye bitterns, till the quagmire reels,
Boon	Rair for his sake !

IX

cornkraiks	Mourn, clam'ring kraiks, at close o' day,
	'Mang fields o' flow'ring clover gay !
	And when you wing your annual way
	Frae our cauld shore,
those	Tell thae far warlds wha lies in clay,
	Wham we deplore.

X

owls	Ye houlets, frae your ivy bower
haunted	In some auld tree, or eldritch tower,

MATTHEW HENDERSON 265

What time the moon, wi' silent glowr,	stare
Sets up her horn,	
Wail thro' the dreary midnight hour	
Till waukrife morn !	wakeful

XI

O rivers, forests, hills, and plains!	
Oft have ye heard my canty strains :	cheerful
But now, what else for me remains	
But tales of woe ?	
And frae my een the drapping rains	eyes
Maun ever flow.	Must

XII

Mourn, Spring, thou darling of the year !	
Ilk cowslip cup shall kep a tear :	catch
Thou, Simmer, while each corny spear	
Shoots up its head,	
Thy gay, green, flowery tresses shear	
For him that's dead !	

XIII

Thou, Autumn, wi' thy yellow hair,	
In grief thy sallow mantle tear !	
Thou, Winter, hurling thro' the air	
The roaring blast,	
Wide o'er the naked world declare	
The worth we've lost !	

XIV

startle

Mourn him, thou Sun, great source of light !
 Mourn, Empress of the silent night !
 And you, ye twinkling starnies bright,
 My Matthew mourn !
 For through your orbs he 's taen his flight,
 Ne'er to return.

XV

O Henderson ! the man ! the brother !
 And art thou gone, and gone for ever ?
 And hast thou crost that unknown river,
 Life's dreary bound ?
 Like thee, where shall I find another,
 The world around ?

XVI

Go to your sculptur'd tombs, ye Great,
 In a' the tinsel trash o' state !
 But by thy honest turf I 'll wait,
 Thou man of worth !
 And weep the ae best fellow's fate
 E'er lay in earth !

THE EPITAPH

I

Stop, passenger ! my story 's brief,
 And truth I shall relate, man :
 I tell nae common tale o' grief,
 For Matthew was a great man.

II

If thou uncommon merit hast,
Yet spurn'd at Fortune's door, man ;
A look of pity hither cast,
For Matthew was a poor man.

III

If thou a noble sodger art,
That passest by this grave, man ;
There moulders here a gallant heart,
For Matthew was a brave man.

IV

If thou on men, their works and ways,
Canst throw uncommon light, man ;
Here lies wha weel had won thy praise,
For Matthew was a bright man.

V

If thou, at Friendship's sacred ca',
Wad life itself resign, man ;
Thy sympathetic tear maun fa',
For Matthew was a kind man.

VI

If thou art staunch, without a stain,
Like the unchanging blue, man ;
This was a kinsman o' thy ain,
For Matthew was a true man.

266 LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

VII

 If thou hast wit, and fun, and fire,
 And ne'er guid wine did fear, man ;
leather This was thy billie, dam, and sire,
 For Matthew was a queer man.

VIII

 If onie whiggish, whingin sot,
 To blame poor Matthew dare, man ;
whining May dool and sorrow be his lot !
was For Matthew was a rare man.

LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

ON THE APPROACH OF SPRING

I

Now Nature hangs her mantle green
On every blooming tree,
And spreads her sheets o' daisies white
Out o'er the grassy lea ;
Now Phoebus cheers the crystal streams,
And glads the azure skies :
But nought can glad the weary wight
That fast in durance lies.

LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS 269

II

Now laverocks wake the merry morn, larks
 Aloft on dewy wing ;
The merle, in his noontide bow'r,
 Makes woodland echoes ring ;
The mavis wild wi' monie a note
 Sings drowsy day to rest :
In love and freedom they rejoice,
 Wi' care nor thrall opprest.

III

Now blooms the lily by the bank,
 The primrose down the brae ; hill-side
The hawthorn's budding in the glen,
 And milk-white is the slae : slae
The meanest hind in fair Scotland
 May rove their sweets amang ;
But I, the Queen of a' Scotland
 Maun lie in prison strang. must

IV

I was the Queen o' bonie France,
 Where happy I hae been ;
Fu' lightly rase I in the morn,
 As blythe lay down at e'en :
And I'm the sov'reign of Scotland,
 And monie a traitor there ;
Yet here I lie in foreign bands
 And never-ending care.

270 LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

V

But as for thee, thou false woman,
 My sister and my fae,
 Grim vengeance yet shall whet a sword
 That thro' thy soul shall gae !
 The weeping blood in woman's breast
 Was never known to thee ;
 Nor th' balm that draps on wounds of woe
 Frae woman's pitying e'e.

VI

My son ! my son ! may kinder stars
 Upon thy fortune shine ;
 And may those pleasures gild thy reign,
 That ne'er wad blink on mine !
 God keep thee frae thy mother's fays,
 Or turn their hearts to thee ;
 And where thou meet'st thy mother's friend,
 Remember him for me !

VII

O ! soon, to me, may summer suns
 Nae mair light up the morn !
 Nae mair to me the autumn winds
 Wave o'er the yellow corn !
 And, in the narrow house of death,
 Let winter round me rave ;
 And the next flow'rs that deck the spring
 Bloom on my peaceful grave.

TO ROBERT GRAHAM OF FINTRY, ESQ.

LATE crippl'd of an arm, and now a leg ;
 About to beg a pass for leave to beg ;
 Dull, listless, teas'd, dejected, and deprest
 (Nature is adverse to a cripple's rest) ;
 Will generous Graham list to his Poet's wail
 (It soothes poor Misery, hearkening to her tale),
 And hear him curse the light he first survey'd,
 And doubly curse the luckless rhyming trade ?

Thou, Nature ! partial Nature ! I arraign ; [Notes]
 Of thy caprice maternal I complain :
 The lion and the bull thy care have found,
 One shakes the forests, and one spurns the ground ;
 Thou giv'st the ass his hide, the snail his shell ;
 Th' envenom'd wasp, victorious, guards his cell ;
 Thy minions kings defend, control, devour,
 In all th' omnipotence of rule and power.
 Foxes and statesmen subtile wiles ensure ;
 The cit and polecat stink, and are secure ;
 Toads with their poison, doctors with their drug,
 The priest and hedgehog in their robes, are snug ;
 Ev'n silly woman has her warlike arts,
 Her tongue and eyes—her dreaded spear and darts

272 TO ROBERT GRAHAM OF FINTRY

But O thou bitter step-mother and hard,
To thy poor, fenceless, naked child—the Bard !
A thing unteachable in world's skill,
And half an idiot too, more helpless still :
No heels to bear him from the op'ning dun,
No claws to dig, his hated sight to shun ;
No horns, but those by luckless Hymen worn,
And those, alas ! not, Amalthea's horn ;
No nerves olfact'ry, Mammon's trusty cur,
Clad in rich Dulness' comfortable fur ;
In naked feeling, and in aching pride,
He bears th' unbroken blast from ev'ry side :
Vampyre booksellers drain him to the heart,
And scorpion critics cureless venom dart.

Critics—appall'd, I venture on the name ;
Those cut-throat bandits in the paths of fame ;
Bloody dissectors, worse than ten Monroes :
He hacks to teach, they mangle to expose.

His heart by causeless wanton malice wrung,
By blockheads' daring into madness stung ;
His well-won bays, than life itself more dear,
By miscreants torn, who ne'er one sprig must
wear ;
Foil'd, bleeding, tortur'd in th' unequal strife,
The hapless Poet flounders on thro' life :
Till, fled each hope that once his bosom fir'd,
And fled each Muse that glorious once inspir'd,

TO ROBERT GRAHAM OF FINTRY 273

Low sunk in squalid, unprotected age,
Dead even resentment for his injur'd page,
He heeds or feels no more the ruthless critic's rage!
So, by some hedge, the gen'rous steed deceas'd,
For half-starv'd snarling curs a dainty feast,
By toil and famine wore to skin and bone,
Lies, senseless of each tugging bitch's son.

O Dulness! portion of the truly blest!
Calm shelter'd haven of eternal rest!
Thy sons ne'er madden in the fierce extremes
Of Fortune's polar frost, or torrid beams.
If mantling high she fills the golden cup,
With sober, selfish ease they sip it up:
Conscious the bounteous meed they well deserve,
They only wonder 'some folks' do not starve.
The grave, sage hern thus easy picks his frog,
And thinks the mallard a sad, worthless dog.
When Disappointment snaps the clue of hope,
And thro' disastrous night they darkling grope,
With deaf endurance sluggishly they bear,
And just conclude 'that fools are fortune's care.'
So, heavy, passive to the tempest's shocks,
Strong on the sign-post stands the stupid ox.

Not so the idle Muses' mad-cap train;
Not such the workings of their moon-struck brain:
In equanimity they never dwell;
By turns in soaring heav'n, or vaulted hell.

274 LAMENT FOR JAMES

I dread thee, Fate, relentless and severe,
 With all a poet's, husband's, father's fear!
 Already one strong hold of hope is lost:
 Glencairn, the truly noble, lies in dust
 (Fled, like the sun eclips'd as noon appears,
 And left us darkling in a world of tears).
 O, hear my ardent, grateful, selfish pray'r!
 Fintry, my other stay, long bless and spare!
 Thro' a long life his hopes and wishes crown,
 And bright in cloudless skies his sun go down!
 May bliss domestic smooth his private path;
 Give energy to life; and soothe his latest breath,
 With many a filial tear circling the bed of death!

LAMENT FOR
 JAMES EARL OF GLENCAIRN

I

THE wind blew hollow frae the hills;
 By fits the sun's departing beam
 Look'd on the fading yellow woods,
 That wav'd o'er Lugar's winding stream.
 Beneath a craigy steep a Bard,
 Laden with years and meikle pain,
 In loud lament bewail'd his lord,
 Whom Death had all untimely taen.

craigy
 much

II

He lean'd him to an ancient aik, oak
 Whose trunk was mould'ring down with years;
 His locks were bleached white with time,
 His hoary cheek was wet wi' tears;
 And as he touch'd his trembling harp,
 And as he tun'd his doleful sang,
 The winds, lamenting thro' their caves,
 To echo bore the notes along :—

III

'Ye scatter'd birds that faintly sing,
 The reliques of the vernal quire !
 Ye woods that shed on a' the winds
 The honours of the aged year !
 A few short months, and, glad and gay,
 Again ye 'll charm the ear and e'e ;
 But nocht in all revolving time
 Can gladness bring again to me.

IV

'I am a bending aged tree,
 That long has stood the wind and rain ;
 But now has come a cruel blast,
 And my last hold of earth is gane ;
 Nae leaf o' mine shall greet the spring,
 Nae simmer sun exalt my bloom ;
 But I maun lie before the storm,
 And ithers plant them in my room.

276 LAMENT FOR JAMES

V

‘I’ve seen sae monie changefu’ years,
 On earth I am a stranger grown :
 I wander in the ways of men,
 Alike unknowing and unknown :
 Unheard, unpitied, unreliev’d,
 I bear alane my lade o’ care ;
 For silent, low, on beds of dust,
 Lie a’ that would my sorrows share.

VI

‘And last (the sum of a’ my griefs!)
 My noble master lies in clay ;
 The flow’r amang our barons bold,
 His country’s pride, his country’s stay :
 In weary being now I pine,
 For a’ the life of life is dead,
 And hope has left my agèd ken,
 On forward wing for ever fled.

VII

‘Awake thy last sad voice, my harp !
 The voice of woe and wild despair !
 Awake, resound thy latest lay,
 Then sleep in silence evermair !
 And thou, my last, best, only friend,
 That fillest an untimely tomb,
 Accept this tribute from the Bard
 Thou brought from Fortune’s mirkest gloom

VIII

‘ In Poverty’s low barren vale,
 Thick mists obscure involv’d me round ;
 Though oft I turn’d the wistful eye,
 Nae ray of fame was to be found ;
 Thou found’st me, like the morning sun
 That melts the fogs in limpid air :
 The friendless Bard and rustic song
 Became alike thy fostering care.

IX

‘ O, why has Worth so short a date,
 While villains ripen grey with time !
 Must thou, the noble, gen’rous, great,
 Fall in bold manhood’s hardy prime ?
 Why did I live to see that day,
 A day to me so full of woe ?
 O, had I met the mortal shaft
 Which laid my benefactor low !

X

‘ The bridegroom may forget the bride
 Was made his wedded wife yestreen ;
 The monarch may forget the crown
 That on his head an hour has been ;
 The mother may forget the child
 That smiles sae sweetly on her knee ;
 But I’ll remember thee, Glencairn,
 And a’ that thou hast done for me !’

LINES TO SIR JOHN WHITEFOORD, BART.

SENT WITH THE FOREGOING POEM

THOU, who thy honour as thy God rever'st,
 Who, save thy mind's reproach, nought earthly
 fear'st,
 To thee this votive off'ring I impart,
 The tearful tribute of a broken heart.
 The Friend thou valued'st, I the Patron lov'd ;
 His worth, his honour, all the world approv'd :
 We'll mourn till we too go as he has gone,
 And tread the shadowy path to that dark world
 unknown.

TAM O' SHANTER

A TALE

Of Brownie and of Hogillie full is this Buke.

GAWIN DOUGLAS.

pedlar
 fellows
 thirsty

road
 ale
 full ; mighty

WHEN chapman billies leave the street,
 And drouthy neebors neebors meet ;
 As market-days are wearing late,
 An' folk begin to tak the gate ;
 While we sit bousing at the nappy,
 An' getting fou and unco happy,

We think na on the lang Scots miles,
 The mosses, waters, slaps, and styles,
 That lie between us and our hame,
 Whare sits our sulky, sullen dame,
 Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
 Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

not
 bogs; pools
 breaches;
 stiles

This truth fand honest Tam o' Shanter,
 As he frae Ayr ae night did canter :
 (Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses,
 For honest men and bonie lasses).

found
 one

O Tam, had'st thou but been sae wise,
 As taen thy ain wife Kate's advice !
 She tauld thee weel thou was a skellum,
 A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum ;
 That frae November till October,
 Ae market-day thou was nae sober ;
 That ilka melder wi' the miller,
 Thou sat as lang as thou had siller ;
 That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on,
 The smith and thee gat roaring fou on ;
 That at the Lord's house, even on Sunday,
 Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean till Monday.
 She prophesied, that, late or soon,
 Thou would be found deep drown'd in Doon,
 Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk
 By Alloway's auld, haunted kirk.

to have taken
 good-for-
 nothing
 chattering ;
 babbler

meal-
 grinding
 money
 called

wizards ;
 dark

makes ; weep

Ah ! gentle dames, it gars me greet,
 To think how monie counsels sweet,
 How monie lengthen'd, sage advices
 The husband frae the wife despises !

uncommonly

foaming
new ale

Cobbler

But to our tale :—Ae market-night,
 Tam had got planted unco right,
 Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,
 Wi' reaming swats, that drank divinely ;
 And at his elbow, Souter Johnnie,
 His ancient, trusty, drouthy cronie :
 Tam lo'ed him like a very brither ;
 They had been fou for weeks thegither.
 The night drave on wi' sangs and clatter ;
 And ay the ale was growing better :
 The landlady and Tam grew gracious
 Wi' secret favours, sweet and precious :
 The Souter tauld his queerest stories ;
 The landlord's laugh was ready chorus :
 The storm without might rair and rustle,
 Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

roar

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
 E'en drown'd himsel amang the nappy.
 As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
 The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure :
 Kings may be blest but Tam was glorious,
 O'er a' the ills o' life victorious !

✓ But pleasures are like poppies spread :
 You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed ;
 Or like the snow falls in the river, [Notes]
 A moment white—then melts for ever ;
 Or like the borealis race,
 That flit ere you can point their place ;
 Or like the rainbow's lovely form
 Evanishing amid the storm.
 Nae man can tether time or tide ;
 The hour approaches Tam maun ride : must
 That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
 That dreary hour Tam mounts his beast in ;
 And sic a night he taks the road in,
 ✓ As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last ; would have
 The rattling showers rose on the blast ;
 The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd ;
 Loud, deep, and lang the thunder bellow'd :
 That night, a child might understand,
 The Deil had business on his hand.

Weel mounted on his gray mare Meg,
 A better never lifted leg,
 Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire, spanked ;
 Despising wind, and rain, and fire ; puddle
 Whiles holding fast his guid blue bonnet, Now
 Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet, song

staring Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares,
 bogies Lest bogles catch him unawares :
 Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
 owls Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry.

across By this time he was cross the ford,
 smothered Whare in the snaw the chapman smoor'd ;
 birches ; And past the birks and meikle stane,
 big Whare drunken Charlie brak 's neck-bane ;
 furze ; pile of And thro' the whins, and by the cairn,
 stones Whare hunters fand the murder'd bairn ;
 above And near the thorn, aboon the well,
 Whare Mungo's mither hang'd hersel.
 Before him Doon pours all his floods ;
 The doubling storm roars thro' the woods ;
 The lightnings flash from pole to pole ;
 Near and more near the thunders roll :
 When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
 Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze,
 every chink Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing,
 And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

 Inspiring bold John Barleycorn,
 What dangers thou canst make us scorn !
 ale Wi' tippenny, we fear nae evil ;
 whisky Wi' usquabae, we 'll face the Devil !
 The swats sae ream'd in Tammie's noddle,
 not ; farthing Fair play, he car'd na deils a boddle.

But Maggie stood, right sair astonish'd,	
Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,	
She ventur'd forward on the light ;	
And, vow ! Tam saw an unco sight !	wondrous

Warlocks and witches in a dance :	
Nae cotillion, brent new frae France,	brand [Notes]
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,	
Put life and mettle in their heels.	
A winnock-bunker in the east,	window-seat
There sat Auld Nick, in shape o' beast ;	
A tousie tyke, black, grim, and large,	shaggy dog
To gie them music was his charge :	
He screw'd the pipes and gart them skirl,	squeal
Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.	ring
Coffins stood round, like open presses,	cupboards
That shaw'd the dead in their last dresses ;	
And, by some devilish cantraip sleight,	magic device
Each in its cauld hand held a light :	
By which heroic Tam was able	
To note upon the haly table,	
A murderer's banes, in gibbet-airns ;	-irons
Twa span-lang, wee, unchristen'd bairns ;	
A thief new-cuttet frae a rape—	
Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape ;	mouth
Five tomahawks wi' bluid red-rusted ;	
Five scymitars wi' murder crusted ;	
A garter which a babe had strangled ;	
A knife a father's throat had mangled—	

Whom his ain son o' life bereft—
 The grey-hairs yet stuck to the heft;
 Wi' mair of horrible and awefu',
 Which even to name wad be unlawfu'.

stared

As Tammie glowr'd, amaz'd, and curious,
 The mirth and fun grew fast and furious;
 The piper loud and louder blew,
 The dancers quick and quicker flew,
 They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit.
 Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,
 And coost her duddies to the wark,
 And linket at it in her sark!

took hold
 beldam
 sweated and
 steamed
 rags
 tripped

these

Now Tam, O Tam! had thae been queans,
 A' plump and strapping in their teens!
 Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,
 Been snaw-white seventeen hunder linen!—
 Thir breeks o' mine, my only pair,
 That ance were plush, o' guid blue hair,
 I wad hae gi'en them off my hurdies
 For ae blink o' the bonie burdies!

greasy

[Notes]

These

buttocks

maidens

[Notes]

wean
 leaping;
 kicking;
 cudgel

But wither'd beldams, auld and droll,
 Rigwoodie hags wad spean a foal,
 Louping and flinging on a crummock,
 I wonder did na turn thy stomach!

well
 comely;
 choice

But Tam kend what was what fu' brawlie:
 There was ae winsome wench and wawlie,

That night enlisted in the core,	company
Lang after kend on Carrick shore	
(For monie a beast to dead she shot,	death
An' perish'd monie a bonie boat,	
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,	much; barley
And kept the country-side in fear).	
Her cutty sark, o' Paisley harn,	short shift; coarse cloth
That while a lassie she had worn,	
In longitude tho' sorely scanty,	
It was her best, and she was vauntie. . . .	proud
Ah! little kend thy reverend grannie,	
That sark she coft for her wee Nannie,	bought
Wi' twa pund Scots ('twas a' her riches),	
Wad ever grac'd a dance of witches!	Would have

But here my Muse her wing maun cour,	stoop
Sic flights are far beyond her power:	
To sing how Nannie lap and flang	leaped and kicked
(A souple jad she was and strang),	
And how Tam stood like ane bewitch'd,	
And thought his very een enrich'd;	
Even Satan glowr'd, and fidg'd fu' fain,	fidgeted; fond
And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main;	jerked
Till first ae caper, syne anither,	then
Tam tint his reason a' thegither,	lost
And roars out: 'Weel done, Cutty-sark!'	
And in an instant all was dark;	
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,	
When out the hellish legion sallied.	

first As bees hiss out wi' angry fyke,
 [Notes]; hive When plundering herds assail their byke;
 the hare's As open pussie's mortal foes,
 When, pop! she starts before their nose;
 As eager runs the market-crowd,
 When 'Catch the thief!' resounds aloud:
 unearthly So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
 Wi' monie an eldritch skriech and hollo.

 Ah, Tam! Ah, Tam! thou'll get thy
 [Notes] fairin!
 In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin!
 In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin!
 Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!
 [Notes] Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
 And win the key-stane of the brig;
 There, at them thou thy tail may toss,
 A running stream they dare na cross!
 devil But ere the key-stane she could make,
 The fiend a tail she had to shake;
 For Nannie, far before the rest,
 Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
 aim And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;
 But little wist she Maggie's mettle!
 whole Ae spring brought off her master hale,
 But left behind her ain grey tail:
 seized The carlin clauht her by the rump,
 And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

ON SEEING A WOUNDED HARE 287

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man, and mother's son, take heed :
Whene'er to drink you are inclin'd,
Or cutty sarks run in your mind,
Think ! ye may buy the joys o'er dear :
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

ON SEEING A WOUNDED HARE LIMP
BY ME WHICH A FELLOW HAD
JUST SHOT AT

I

INHUMAN man ! curse on thy barb'rous art,
And blasted be thy murder-aiming eye ;
May never pity soothe thee with a sigh,
Nor never pleasure glad thy cruel heart !

II

Go live, poor wanderer of the wood and field,
The bitter little that of life remains !
No more the thickening brakes and verdant plains
To thee shall home, or food, or pastime yield.

III

Seek, mangled wretch, some place of wonted rest,
No more of rest, but now thy dying bed !
The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head,
The cold earth with thy bloody bosom prest.

238 TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON

IV

Oft as by winding Nith I, musing, wait
The sober eve, or hail the cheerful dawn,
I'll miss thee sporting o'er the dewy lawn,
And curse the ruffian's aim, and mourn thy hapless
fate.

ADDRESS TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON

ON CROWNING HIS BUST AT EDNAM, ROXBURGHSHIRE,
WITH A WREATH OF BAYS

I

While virgin Spring by Eden's flood
Unfolds her tender mantle green,
Or pranks the sod in frolic mood,
Or tunes Eolian strains between :

II

While Summer, with a matron grace,
Retreats to Dryburgh's cooling shade,
Yet oft, delighted, stops to trace
The progress of the spikey blade :

III

While Autumn, benefactor kind,
By Tweed erects his aged head,
And sees, with self-approving mind,
Each creature on his bounty fed :

ON THE LATE CAPTAIN GROSE 289

IV

While maniac Winter rages o'er
The hills whence classic Yarrow flows,
Rousing the turbid torrent's roar,
Or sweeping, wild, a waste of snows :

V

So long, sweet Poet of the year !
Shall bloom that wreath thou well has
won ;
While Scotia, with exulting tear,
Proclaims that Thomson was her son.

ON THE LATE CAPTAIN GROSE'S
PEREGRINATIONS THRO'
SCOTLAND

COLLECTING THE ANTIQUITIES OF THAT KINGDOM

I

HEAR, Land o' Cakes, and brither Scots
Frae Maidenkirke to Johnie Groat's,
If there's a hole in a' your coats,

I rede you tent it :

look to

A chield's amang you takin notes,

fellow

And faith he'll prent it :

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T

290 ON THE LATE CAPTAIN GROSE'S

II

dumpy If in your bounds ye chance to light
 Upon a fine, fat, fodgeg wight,
 O' stature short but genius bright,
That's he, mark weel :
skill
In chalk and
riddle And wow ! he ha' an unco sleight
O' cauk and keel.

III

out-;
dwelling
roof By some auld, howlet-haunted biggin,
 Or kirk deserted by its riggin,
 It's ten to ane ye'll find him snug in
Some eldritch part,
fourstone
save us Wi' deils, they say, Lord safe 's' ! colleaguin
At some black art.

IV

Each ;
chamber Ilk ghaist that haunts auld ha' or cham'er.
 Ye gipsy-gang that deal in glamour,
 And you, deep-read in hell's black grammar,
Warlocks and witches :
 Ye'll quake at his conjuring hammer,
Ye midnight bitches !

V

would have It's tauld he was a sodger bred,
 And ane wad rather fa'n than died ;

PEREGRINATIONS THRO' SCOTLAND 291

But now he's quat the spurtle-blade
 And dog-skin wallet,
 And taen the—Antiquarian trade,
 I think they call it.

quitted;
 pot-stick
 (= sword)

VI

He has a fouth o' auld nick-nackets:
 Rusty airn caps and jinglin jackets
 Wad haud the Lothians three in tackets
 A towmont guid;
 And parritch-pats and auld saut-backets
 Before the Flood.

abundance
 iron
 shoenails
 twelvemonth
 porridge-
 pots;
 salt-boxes

VII

Of Eve's first fire he has a cinder;
 Auld Tubalcain's fire-shool and fender;
 That which distinguishèd the gender
 O' Balaam's ass;
 A broomstick o' the witch of Endor,
 Weel shod wi' brass.

VIII

Forbye, he'll shape you aff fu' gleg
 The cut of Adam's philibeg;
 The knife that nicket Abel's craig
 He'll prove you fully,
 It was a faulding jocteleg,
 Or lang-kail gullie.

Besides;
 smartly
 kilt
 slit; throat
 Jacques de
 Liège (= a
 clasp knife)
 [Notes]

292 TO MISS CRUICKSHANK

IX

much
But wad ye see him in his glee—
For meikle glee and fun has he—
Then set him down, and twa or three
Guid fellows wi' him ;
And port, O port ! shine thou a wee,
And then ye'll see him !

X

Now, by the Pow'rs o' verse and prose !
Thou art a dainty chield, O Grose !—
Whae'er o' thee shall ill suppose,
They sair misca' thee ;
I'd take the rascal by the nose,
befall
Wad say, ' Shame fa' thee.'

TO MISS CRUICKSHANK

A VERY YOUNG LADY

*Written on the Blank Leaf of a Book, presented
to her by the Author*

BEAUTEOUS Rosebud, young and gay,
Blooming on thy early May,
Never may'st thou, lovely flower,
Chilly shrink in sleety shower !
Never Boreas' hoary path,
Never Eurus' pois'nous breath,
Never baleful stellar lights,
Taint thee with untimely blights !

Never, never reptile thief
 Riot on thy virgin leaf!
 Nor even Sol too fiercely view
 Thy bosom blushing still with dew!

May'st thou long, sweet crimson gem,
 Richly deck thy native stem;
 Till some ev'ning, sober, calm,
 Dropping dews and breathing balm,
 While all around the woodland rings,
 And ev'ry bird thy requiem sings,
 Thou, amid the dirgeful sound,
 Shed thy dying honours round,
 And resign to parent Earth
 The loveliest form she e'er gave birth.

SONG: ANNA THY CHARMS

I

ANNA thy charms my bosom fire,
 And waste my soul with care;
 But ah! how bootless to admire
 When fated to despair!

II

Yet in thy presence, lovely Fair,
 To hope may be forgiven:
 For sure 'twere impious to despair
 So much in sight of Heaven.

ON READING IN A NEWSPAPER THE
DEATH OF JOHN M'LEOD, ESQ.

BROTHER TO A YOUNG LADY, A PARTICULAR
FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR'S

I

SAD thy tale, thou idle page,
And rueful thy alarms :
Death tears the brother of her love
From Isabella's arms.

II

Sweetly deckt with pearly dew
The morning rose may blow ;
But cold successive noontide blasts
May lay its beauties low.

III

Fair on Isabella's morn
The sun propitious smil'd ;
But, long ere noon, succeeding clouds
Succeeding hopes beguil'd.

IV

Fate oft tears the bosom-chords
That Nature finest strung :
So Isabella's heart was form'd,
And so that heart was wrung.

HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER 295

v

Dread Omnipotence alone
Can heal the wound he gave—
Can point the brimful, grief-worn eyes
To scenes beyond the grave.

vi

Virtue's blossoms there shall blow,
And fear no withering blast ;
There Isabella's spotless worth
Shall happy be at last.

**THE HUMBLE PETITION OF
BRUAR WATER**

TO THE NOBLE DUKE OF ATHOLE

i

My lord, I know, your noble ear
Woe ne'er assails in vain ;
Embolden'd thus, I beg you'll hear
Your humble slave complain,
How saucy Phœbus' scorching beams,
In flaming summer-pride,
Dry-withering, waste my foamy streams,
And drink my crystal tide.

296 HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER

II

staring The lightly-jumping, glowrin trouts,
 That thro' my waters play,
 If, in their random, wanton spouts,
 They near the margin stray ;
 If, hapless chance ! they linger lang,
 I 'm scorching up so shallow,
 They're left the whitening stanes amang
 In gasping death to wallow.

III

wep't ;
 vexation Last day I grat wi' spite and teen,
 As Poet Burns came by,
 That, to a Bard, I should be seen
 Wi' half my channel dry ;
 A panegyric rhyme, I ween,
 offer'd Ev'n as I was, he shor'd me ;
 But had I in my glory been,
 would have He, kneeling, wad ador'd me.

IV

shelvy Here, foaming down the skelvy rocks,
 In twisting strength I rin ;
 There high my boiling torrent smokes,
 fall Wild-roaring o'er a linn :
 Enjoying large each spring and well,
 As Nature gave them me,
 I am, altho' I say 't mysel,
 going Worth gaun a mile to see.

HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER 297

V

Would, then, my noble master please
To grant my highest wishes,
He'll shade my banks wi' tow'ring trees
And bonie spreading bushes.
Delighted doubly then, my lord,
You'll wander on my banks,
And listen monie a grateful bird
Return you tuneful thanks.

VI

The sober laverock, warbling wild,	lark
Shall to the skies aspire ;	
The gowdspink, Music's gayest child,	goldfinch
Shall sweetly join the choir ;	
The blackbird strong, the lintwhite clear,	linnet
The mavis mild and mellow,	
The robin, pensive Autumn cheer	
In all her locks of yellow.	

VII

This, too, a covert shall ensure	
To shield them from the storm ;	
And coward maukin sleep secure,	hare
Low in her grassy form :	
Here shall the shepherd make his seat	
To weave his crown of flow'rs ;	
Or find a shelt'ring, safe retreat	
From prone-descending show'rs.	

VIII

And here, by sweet, endearing stealth,
 Shall meet the loving pair,
 Despising worlds with all their wealth,
 As empty idle care :
 The flow'rs shall vie, in all their charms,
 The hour of heav'n to grace ;
 And birks extend their fragrant arms
 To screen the dear embrace.

IX

Here haply too, at vernal dawn,
 Some musing Bard may stray,
 And eye the smoking, dewy lawn
 And misty mountain grey ;
 Or, by the reaper's nightly beam,
 Mild-chequering thro' the trees,
 Rave to my darkly dashing stream,
 Hoarse-swelling on the breeze.

X

Let lofty firs and ashes cool
 My lowly banks o'erspread,
 And view, deep-bending in the pool,
 Their shadows' wat'ry bed :
 Let fragrant birks, in woodbines drest,
 My craggy cliffs adorn,
 And, for the little songster's nest,
 The close embow'ring thorn !

ON SCARING SOME WATER-FOWL 299

XI

So may, old Scotia's darling hope,
Your little angel band
Spring, like their fathers, up to prop
Their honour'd native land !
So may, thro' Albion's farthest ken,
To social-flowing glasses,
The grace be : ' Athole's honest men
And Athole's bonie lasses !'

ON SCARING SOME WATER-FOWL IN LOCH TURIT

A WILD SCENE AMONG THE HILLS OF OUGHTERTYRE

Why, ye tenants of the lake,
For me your wat'ry haunt forsake ?
Tell me, fellow creatures, why
At my presence thus you fly ?
Why disturb your social joys,
Parent, filial, kindred ties ?—
Common friend to you and me,
Nature's gifts to all are free :
Peaceful keep your dimpling wave,
Busy feed, or wanton lave ;
Or, beneath the sheltering rock,
Bide the surging billow's shock.

300 ON SCARING SOME WATER-FOWL

Conscious, blushing for our race,
Soon, too soon, your fears I trace.
Man, your proud, usurping foe,
Would be lord of all below :
Plumes himself in freedom's pride,
Tyrant stern to all beside.

The eagle, from the cliffy brow
Marking you his prey below,
In his breast no pity dwells,
Strong necessity compels :
But Man, to whom alone is giv'n
A ray direct from pitying Heav'n,
Glories in his heart humane—
And creatures for his pleasure slain !

In these savage, liquid plains,
Only known to wand'ring swains,
Where the mossy riv'let strays
Far from human haunts and ways,
All on Nature you depend,
And life's poor season peaceful spend.

Or, if Man's superior might
Dare invade your native right,
On the lofty ether borne,
Man with all his powers you scorn ;
Swiftly seek, on clanging wings,
Other lakes, and other springs ;
And the foe you cannot brave,
Scorn at least to be his slave.

VERSES WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL

OVER THE CHIMNEY-PIECE, IN THE PARLOUR OF
THE INN AT KENMORE, TAYMOUTH

ADMIRING Nature in her wildest grace,
These northern scenes with weary feet I trace ;
O'er many a winding dale and painful steep,
Th' abodes of covey'd grouse and timid sheep,
My savage journey, curious, I pursue,
Till fam'd Breadalbane opens to my view.
The meeting cliffs each deep-sunk glen divides :
The woods, wild-scatter'd, clothe their ample sides ;
Th' outstretching lake, imbosomed 'mong the hills,
The eye with wonder and amazement fills :
The Tay meand'ring sweet in infant pride,
The palace rising on his verdant side,
The lawns wood-fring'd in Nature's native taste,
The hillocks dropt in Nature's careless haste,
The arches striding o'er the new-born stream,
The village glittering in the noontide beam—

Poetic ardors in my bosom swell,
Lone wand'ring by the hermit's mossy cell ;
The sweeping theatre of hanging woods,
Th' incessant roar of headlong tumbling floods—

302 LINES ON THE FALL OF FYERS

Here Poesy might wake her heav'n-taught lyre.
And look through Nature with creative fire ;
Here, to the wrongs of Fate half reconcil'd,
Misfortune's lighten'd steps might wander wild ;
And Disappointment, in these lonely bounds,
Find balm to soothe her bitter rankling wounds ;
Here heart-struck Grief might heav'nward stretch
her scan,
And injur'd Worth forget and pardon man.

LINES ON THE FALL OF FYERS NEAR LOCH NESS

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL ON THE SPOT

Among the heathy hills and ragged woods
The roaring Fyers pours his mossy floods ;
Till full he dashes on the rocky mounds,
Where, thro' a shapeless breach, his stream resounds.
As high in air the bursting torrents flow,
As deep recoiling surges foam below,
Prone down the rock the whitening sheet descends,
And viewless Echo's ear, astonish'd, rends.
Dim-seen through rising mists and ceaseless show'rs,
The hoary cavern, wide-surrounding, lours :
Still thro' the gap the struggling river toils,
And still, below, the horrid caldron boils—

ON THE BIRTH OF A POSTHUMOUS
CHILD

BORN IN PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES OF
FAMILY DISTRESS

I

SWEET flow'ret, pledgè o' meikle love, much
And ward o' monie a prayer,
What heart o' stane wad thou na move,
Sae helpless, sweet, and fair !

II

November hirples o'er the lea, hobbles
Chill, on thy lovely form ;
And gane, alas ! the shelt'ring tree,
Should shield thee frae the storm.

III

May He who gives the rain to pour,
And wings the blast to blaw,
Protect thee frae the driving show'r,
The bitter frost and snaw !

IV

May He, the friend of Woe and Want, shocks
Who heals life's various stounds,
Protect and guard the mother plant,
And heal her cruel wounds !

V

But late she flourish'd, rooted fast,
Fair on the summer morn,
Now feebly bends she in the blast,
Unshelter'd and forlorn.

VI

Blest be thy bloom, thou lovely gem,
Unscath'd by ruffian hand !
And from thee many a parent stem
Arise to deck our land !

THE WHISTLE

A Ballad

I

I sing of a Whistle, a Whistle of worth,
I sing of a Whistle, the pride of the North,
Was brought to the court of our good Scottish King,
And long with this Whistle all Scotland shall ring.

II

Old Loda, still rueing the arm of Fingal,
The God of the Bottle sends down from his hall :
'This Whistle's your challenge, to Scotland get o'er,
And drink them to Hell, Sir! or ne'er see me more!'

III

Old poets have sung, and old chronicles tell,
What champions ventur'd, what champions fell :
The son of great Loda was conqueror still,
And blew on the Whistle their requiem shrill.

IV

Till Robert, the lord of the Cairn and the Scaur,
Unmatch'd at the bottle, unconquer'd in war,
He drank his poor god-ship as deep as the sea ;
No tide of the Baltic e'er drunker than he.

V

Thus Robert, victorious, the trophy has gain'd ;
Which now in his house has for ages remain'd ;
Till three noble chieftains, and all of his blood,
The jovial contest again have renew'd.

VI

Three joyous good fellows, with hearts clear of flaw ;
Craigdarroch, so famous for wit, worth, and law ;
And trusty Glenriddel, so skilled in old coins ;
And gallant Sir Robert, deep-read in old wines.

VII

Craigdarroch began, with a tongue smooth as oil,
Desiring Glenriddel to yield up the spoil ;
Or else he would muster the heads of the clan,
And once more, in claret, try which was the man.

VIII

'By the gods of the ancients!' Glenriddel replies,
'Before I surrender so glorious a prize,
I'll conjure the ghost of the great Rorie More,
And bumper his horn with him twenty times o'er.'

IX

Sir Robert, a soldier, no speech would pretend,
But he ne'er turn'd his back on his foe, or his
friend;
Said:—'Toss down the Whistle, the prize of the
field,'
And, knee-deep in claret, he'd die ere he'd yield.

X

To the board of Glenriddel our heroes repair,
So noted for drowning of sorrow and care;
But for wine and for welcome not more known to
fame
Than the sense, wit, and taste, of a sweet lovely
dame.

XI

A Bard was selected to witness the fray,
And tell future ages the feats of the day;
A Bard who detested all sadness and spleen,
And wish'd that Parnassus a vineyard had been.

XII

The dinner being over, the claret they ply,
And ev'ry new cork is a new spring of joy ;
In the bands of old friendship and kindred so set,
And the bands grew the tighter the more they were
wet.

XIII

Gay Pleasure ran riot as bumpers ran o'er ;
Bright Phœbus ne'er witness'd so joyous a core, company
And vow'd that to leave them he was quite forlorn,
Till Cynthia hinted he'd see them next morn.

XIV

Six bottles a-piece had well wore out the night,
When gallant Sir Robert, to finish the fight,
Turn'd o'er in one bumper a bottle of red,
And swore 'twas the way that their ancestor did.

XV

Then worthy Glenriddel, so cautious and sage,
No longer the warfare ungodly would wage :
A high Ruling Elder to wallow in wine !
He left the foul business to folks less divine.

XVI

The gallant Sir Robert fought hard to the end ;
But who can with Fate and quart bumpers contend ?
Though Fate said, a hero should perish in light ;
So uprose bright Phœbus—and down fell the knight.

XVII

Next uprose our Bard, like a prophet in drink :—
' Craigdarroch, thou 'lt soar when creation shall sink !
But if thou would flourish immortal in rhyme,
Come—one bottle more—and have at the sublime !

XVIII

'Thy line, that have struggled for freedom with
Bruce,
Shall heroes and patriots ever produce :
So thine be the laurel, and mine be the bay ;
The field thou hast won, by yon bright God of Day !'

NOTES

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL

For some time before 1786 Burns had cherished a desire for 'guid black prent'; and its fulfilment was hastened in the end by the thought of his removal to Jamaica. 'Before leaving my native country,' he says, 'I resolved to publish my poems.' Sent to press on the 3rd April, his Prospectus ran thus:—

April 14th 1786.

PROPOSALS FOR PUBLISHING BY SUBSCRIPTION

SCOTTISH POEMS BY ROBERT BURNS

The work to be elegantly printed in one volume octavo. Price stitched Three Shillings. As the author has not the most distant mercenary view in publishing, as soon as so many subscribers appear as will defray the necessary expense, the work will be sent to the press.

'Set out the brunt side of your shin,
For pride in poets is nae sin;
Glory's the prize for which they rin,
And Fame's their joe;
And wha blaws best his horn shall win—
And wherefore no?'

ALLAN RAMSAY.

We under-subscribers engage to take the above-mentioned work on the conditions specified.

When three hundred subscriptions were received, the book was sent to press, and an edition of six hundred copies was printed off. It appeared on the 31st July with

the title: '*Poems chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* by Robert Burns. Kilmarnock: Printed by John Wilson, 1786'; and with this device on the title-page:—

'The simple Bard, unbroke by rules of Art,
He pours the wild effusions of the heart;
And if inspir'd, 'tis Nature's pow'rs inspire,
Hers all the melting thrill, and hers the kindling fire.'

ANONYMOUS.

It was a handsome octavo, the paper 9 inches by 5½, printed in large and exceptionally good type, on fair paper with ample margins, and—except for a few copies in paper covers—bound according to the prevailing fashion in blue boards, with a white back and a decent label. On 30th July, the eve of publication, Burns wrote thus to Richmond: 'My hour is now come,' and 'you and I shall never meet in Britain more.' By the end of August nearly the whole impression was subscribed, and Burns, 'after deducting all expenses,' pocketed, according to his own statement, 'nearly twenty pounds': a much smaller sum than is shown in the account between him and Wilson. 'The money,' he says, 'came in seasonably, as I was about to indent myself for want of money to pay my freight. As soon as I was master of nine guineas, the price of wafting me to the torrid zone, I bespoke a passage in the very first ship that was to sail—

'For hungry ruin had me in the wind.'

Divers circumstances combined to delay his departure, and although on the 14th August he booked to sail on the 1st September, September passed and he was still in Scotland. On the 9th October, after settling accounts with Wilson, he offered him a second edition: 'on the hazard of being paid out of the first and readiest.' Wilson declined, and the disappointment more strongly confirmed his determination to leave the country. He would inevitably have done so, if he had not chanced to

see a letter from Dr. Blacklock to the Rev. Dr. Lawrie of Newmilns, expressing a strong opinion in favour of a second edition, and affirming that the book might 'obtain a more universal circulation than anything of the kind' within the writer's memory. At this time he had taken 'the last farewell' of his friends; his 'chest was on the road to Greenock'; he had devised a song, *The Gloomy Night is Gathering Fast*, as the 'last effort' of his 'Muse in Caledonia.' But the letter upset all his schemes, and determined him to get his verse reissued by an Edinburgh publisher; so he 'posted' to the capital, 'without a single acquaintance in town,' or 'a single letter of recommendation' in his pocket. Through the Earl of Glencairn he was introduced to Creech: with the result that a new Edition (the First Edinburgh) was ready for delivery on the 18th April.

Three thousand copies were printed, for over fifteen hundred subscribers: the book being entitled '*Poems chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. By Robert Burns. Edinburgh. Printed for the Author and Sold by William Creech. 1787.' Many important pieces—some written while the volume was going through the press—were added; but not even in the Dedication to the Caledonian Hunt was there so much as a hint that this was a Second Edition. Moreover, two separate—or in great part separate—impressions were issued simultaneously, *under the same title*. They are known, respectively, as the 'Skinking' and the 'Stinking' Editions, from the orthography of a certain word in the verses *To a Haggis*, and they differ in many points of spelling and punctuation. Some hold the 'Stinking' impression to be the earlier: that errors were discovered in the course of printing, or that there was an insufficiency of type, so that a great part was reset; and a few are of opinion that the 'Skinking' Edition was a surreptitious one. On the other hand, Mr. Barclay Murdoch, who supplies a tabulation—almost exhaustive—of the variations in the

two editions, in *The Burns Chronicle* for 1895, has come to the conclusion that a second impression 'became necessary' to supply the 'great excess' in the demand over the 'original estimate.' This conclusion we can substantiate on the authority of Burns himself. 'I have,' he writes in an unpublished letter to Mrs. Dunlop—22nd March 1787,—among the Lochryan *ms.*, 'both a second and a third edition going on, as the second began with too small a number of copies. The whole I have printed is three thousand.' In view of this statement, and since, too, the 'Skinking' Edition corresponds the more closely to that of 1786, we must conclude that the 'Stinking' was the last printed. There is evidence that the sheets had undergone deliberate alteration—probably by Burns; but another set of variations is clearly traceable to the printer, and was due either to hurry or to incompetence, so that, notwithstanding several important amendments and corrections, this impression is on the whole the less correct. The sheets were used for a supplementary issue, printed—with some additional errors—in London, and published under the title:—'*Poems chiefly in the Scottish Dialect.* By Robert Burns. The Third Edition. London: Printed for A. Strahan: T. Cadell in the Strand: and W. Creech, Edinburgh. 1787.'

In Chambers's bibliography mention is made of an edition published by Creech at Edinburgh in [July] 1790; and Scott Douglas states—perhaps on the sole authority of Chambers—that Creech issued a reprint of the one-volume Edinburgh Edition in July 1790. This theory is held to be substantiated by Burns in a letter to Peter Hill in 1791:—'By the way I have taken a damned vengeance of Creech. He wrote me a fine letter telling me that he was going to put out a new edition, and as he had a brother's care of my fame, he wished to add every new thing I had written since, and I should be amply rewarded with—a copy or two to present to my

friends. He has sent me a copy of the last edition to correct ; but I have, as yet, taken no notice of it, and I hear he has published without me.' But there is no evidence that any copy with the imprint 'Edinburgh 1790' survives : and we must therefore conclude that, if Creech did issue a reprint in July 1790, he issued it with the old date '1787.'

In the April of 1792 Creech proposed another issue, and Burns replied with an offer of fifty new pages, and the retrenchment and correction of some old pieces. Reminding his publisher that these fifty pages were as much his own 'as the thumb-skull I have just now drawn on my finger, which I unfortunately gashed in mending my pen,' he practically agreed to Creech's former terms : craving as his sole recompence a few books which he very much wanted, 'with as many copies of this new edition of my own works as friendship or gratitude shall prompt me to present.' Creech was not the man to boggle at a bargain of the kind, and the new edition, printed from a corrected copy of the 'Skinking' impression, appeared in the February of 1793, under the title :—'*Poems chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. By Robert Burns in two volumes. The Second Edition Considerably Enlarged. Edinburgh : Printed for T. Cadell, London, and William Creech, Edinburgh. 1793.' The volumes, with nearly the same page and the same type, but with many changes in spelling, and some new readings of lines and stanzas, were reprinted early in 1794, with—excepting for the substitution of 'a New Edition' for 'the Second Edition'—an exactly similar title.

No other Scots reprint appeared in Burns's lifetime, though in Ireland and America there were several. Thus, the sole editions issued under his superintendence were the Kilmarnock, 1786 ; the First Edinburgh, of which there are practically two editions—the 'Skinking,' 1787 (1), and the 'Stinking,' 1787 (2) ; the Second Edinburgh, described as 'The Second Edition Considerably En-

larged,' 1793; and the Third Edinburgh—described as 'A New Edition Considerably Enlarged,' 1794. Additional poems were included in the Editions of 1787 and 1793, but not in that of 1794. The peculiar feature of the 1786 Edition is the *an*, *et*, and *'t* endings. 'The participle present,' says Burns, 'instead of *ing* ends, in the Scotch Dialect, in *an* or *in*; in *an* particularly when the verb is composed of the participle present and any of the tenses of the auxiliary *to be*. The past tense and participle past are usually made by shortening the *ed* into *'t*.' Probably on Creech's advice, he abolished the older endings in his Edition of 1787, substituting *in* or *ing* for *an* and *it* for *et*; and from that time forth he practically ceased to use them. It would therefore be pedantic to restore them, even in the case of pieces published in 1786, nor have we cared to record such variations in our *Notes*. In both the issues of 1787 typographical errors were corrected, and some new readings introduced; further emendations and improvements were effected in the Edition of 1793; and its text would have been much superior to either 1787 (1) or 1787 (2), but for a batch of new errata done by the printer.

True, in a letter to Cunningham, 10th September 1792, Burns refers to his absorption in 'the press-work of two different publications,' and it has been concluded that he was busy with proofs of his new Edition, as well as proofs of songs for Johnson's *Museum*. He was only beginning his correspondence with Thomson; but from internal evidence it is almost certain that, although he sent a corrected copy of the 1787 (1) to his printer, the only sheets which he revised—if he revised even these—were filled with pieces published for the first time. Apparently he looked to Tytler to see his book through the press; and Tytler failed him. A large number of typographical errors was corrected in the 1794 Edition; but, on the advice of Tytler and others, certain new readings were introduced, scarce any of which can be regarded as

improvements, while divers changes in spelling were made, the most of them tending still further to weaken, or to bastardise, the old Scots tongue.

As each Edition has peculiar merits and defects, it has been the Editors' aim to redact the best text possible from among the five, by means of an exhaustive collation—the first ever systematically done. Typographical errors common to all are corrected, and an endeavour has been made, in so far as seemed expedient, to harmonise the spelling. To indicate every minute variation is impossible; but it has been deemed advisable—out of respect both to the reader and to Burns—to set down all the more important. The reading adopted occurs, unless otherwise stated, in that Edition, or those Editions, not mentioned in the Note.

In the case of the present volume collation with *mss.* is not of primary importance, as it is in that of the other three. All the same, it supplies a number of interesting and useful data on the poet's mastery of his art; while it has shown that there are instances in which the written is preferable before the printed reading. In our Notes the *mss.* are classed, in so far as is possible, according to chronology, as *ms. (A)*, *ms. (B)*, etc. The more important, as regards the present volume, are the *First Common Place Book*, printed in 1872, and, more correctly, in Scott Douglas's edition; a *Supplement* thereto—embracing some fifteen of the more important pieces (1786), purchased in 1888 by the Committee of the Kilmarnock Monument, and edited, with other *mss.* in the Monument, by Mr. David Sneddon; the printer's copy of several poems in the 1786 Edition, in possession of the Irvine Burns Club, to which body we are further indebted for the photographic reproduction of *The Address to the Deil*; the verses included in Burns's *Private Journal*, begun in Edinburgh 9th April 1787, now in the possession of Mr. Alexander Macmillan, who, notwithstanding that its contents were published, substantially, in *Macmillan's*

THE LINE 2. 'That bears the name o' auld King Coil,' MS.
TWA (B), 1786, 1787 (1), 1793, and 1794 :—The 'auld King Coil,'
DOGS from whom Kyle, the middle district of Ayrshire, is supposed
to derive its name, is pure myth, though the castle is of
unknown antiquity. The district itself is divided by the
river Ayr into King's Kyle and Stewart Kyle. 25. 'Wha
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27. 'After some dog in Highland sang':—'Cuchullin's dog in
Ossian's *Fingal*' (R. B.). 29. 'He was a gash an' *faithful* tyke,'
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howket,' MS. (A), '*and mode-wurks*,' MS. (B) and 1786;
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43-44 read thus :—

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Upon a knowe they sat them down.'

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trashtrie,' 1793; '*and*,' 1794. 65. 'Our whipper-in, wee, blastit
wonner':—Hugh Andrew, whipper-in to Colonel Montgomery
of Coilsfield. 71. 'Trowth *Cesar* *whiles* their fash'd eneugh,'
MS. (A); '*their*' 1786, 1787 (1), and 1787 (2); '*enough*,' 1786,
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and 1786. 83. 'But how it comes I never *hent* yet,' MSS. (A
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snash,' etc.:—'My father's generous master died; the farm
proved a ruinous bargain; and to clench the curse, we fell into
the hands of a factor, who sat for the picture I have drawn of
one in my *Tale of Two Dogs*' (BURNS in *Autobiographical Letter*).
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hear it a' an' fear *and* tremble,' 1793. 103-106. The colon
might follow either 'think' or 'brink': the former is preferable.
103. '*There* no sae wretched's ane wad think,' MS. (A); 'They're
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(2). 115. 'An' whyles twalpennie worth o' nappy':—A chopin (quart) of ale cost but twelve pence Scots=a penny sterling. 119-120. 'They'll talk o' patronage an' priests,' etc., omitted in MS. (A). 119. 'They'll talk o' patronage and priests,' 1793 and 1794. 120. 'Wi' kindling fury in their breasts,' 1793 and 1794. In MS. (A) 121-122 read thus:—

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An' wonder at the folk in Lon'on.'

122. 'And ferlie at the folk in Lon'on,' 1793. 125. 'When rural life is every station,' MS. (A); 'o', 1793 and 1794. 130. 'They bar the door on frosty winds,' 1794. 133. 'The luntin pipe, the smishin mill,' MS. (A). 136. 'The young ones ranting thro' the house,' 1793. 143. 'Are riven out baith root and branch,' 1793 and 1794. 147. 'Wha ablinks thrang a parliamentin,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794. 156. 'To Hague or Calais takes a waft,' MS. (A) and 1786. 157. 'To make a tour an' take a whirl,' MS. (A); 'take,' MS. (B); 'make,' 1786; 'roust' for 'tour,' 1793. 161. 'Or by Madrid he takes the rout,' MS. (A), MS. (B), 1786 and 1787 (1). 162. 'To pley guitares an' fight wi' nowt,' MS. (A). In MS. (A), MS. (B), and 1786 167-168 read thus:—

' An' purge the bitter ga's an' cankers
O' curst Venetian bores and shankers';

but in MS. (B) and 1786 'chancres' for *shankers*. 168. 'Love-gifts of carnival signioras,' 1787 (1) and 1787 (2). 173. 'Are we sae foughten and harass'd, 1786, 1787 (1), 1787 (2); 'an' harass'd,' 1793. 184. 'Or shootin' a hare or moorcock,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794. 190. 'The gentles ye wad neer envy them,' MSS. (A and B), and 1786. 192. 'Thro' winters cauld or summers heat,' MSS. (A and B), and 1786; 'Tho', 1794. 196. 'For a' their colleges and schools,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794. 201. 'A countra fellow at his pleugh,' MS. (A); 'A country fellow at the pleugh,' MS. (B), 1786, 1787 (1), 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794. Similarly 'country' in 203, where MS. (A) has 'lassie' for 'girl.' 202. 'His acre's till'd he's right enough,' 1794; 'done' deleted below 'till'd' in MS. (A). 206. 'Wi' even-down Want o' Wark they're curst,'

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MS. (A). 206. 'Wi' even-down Want o' Wark they're curst,'

- THE MS. (A). 208. 'Tho deil-haet ails them *they're* uneasy,' MS. (A).
 TWA In MS. (A) 211-212 read thus :—
 DOGS 'An' even their sports, *like* Balls an' races,
 An' galloping thro' public-places.'
 229. 'There's some *exception*, man an' woman,' 1793 and 1794.
 237. 'An' each took *off* his several way,' MS. (B) and 1786.
 238. 'Resolved to meet *another* day,' MS. (A).

SCOTCH DRINK

Composed some time between the beginning of November 1785 and 17th February 1786 (letter of Burns to Richmond). On 20th March Burns sent a copy to his friend Robert Muir, wine-merchant, Kilmarnock :—'May the — follow with a blessing for your edification.' The metre, which has come to be regarded as essentially Scottish (see Prefatory Note to the *Address to the Deil*, p. 336), is that of Fergusson's *Cauler Water*, of which *Scotch Drink* is a kind of parody. In the two opening lines :—

'Let other Poets raise a fracas
 'Bout vines, an' wines, and drunken Bacchus' :—

Burns professes to homologate his predecessor's sentiments in regard to

'The fuddlin' Bardies [who] now-a-days
 Rin maukin-mad in Bacchus' praise.'

but substitutes for cold water 'the juice Scotch bear can mak us.' The *ms.* in the Kilmarnock book—*ms.* (A)—differs but slightly from the printer's copy—*ms.* (B)—possessed by the Irvine Burns Club. The motto shows, however, a few variations :—in the second and in the fourth line '*wha*' for '*that's*'; fourth line '*or*' deleted below '*an*'; and fifth line '*them*' deleted below '*him*,' and '*we*' below '*an*.' In the seventh line *ms.* (B) has '*an*' instead of '*or*' as printed.

STANZA I. LINE I. 'Let *ither* Poets raise a fracas,' MS. (A).
 5. 'I sing the juice *Scot's* bear can mak us,' 1794.

STANZA III. *Cf.* Duet, 'O Lovely Peace,' in Handel's *Judas Maccabæus*. 3. 'An' pease and beans at e'en or morn,' 1793 DRINK and 1794.

STANZA IV. LINE 2. 'In souple scones':—The 'souple scones' were very thin, pliable cakes of barley meal, long a favourite bread of the Scottish peasantry. 3. 'Or tumblin in the boiling flood,' 1794. 4. 'Wi' kale':—The colewort or 'green kale' was the chief vegetable of old Scotland. Hence the 'kale-yard' was the common name for the cotter's garden; and 'kale' the synonym for Scotch broth, of which barley also was an important ingredient.

STANZA V. LINE 2. 'But life's a gift no worth receivin,' deleted reading in MS. (B).

STANZA VII. LINE 5. 'His wee-drap *pirratch* or his bread,' MSS. (A and B), and 1786.

STANZA IX. LINE 4. 'In cog or bicker':—Both wooden vessels. From the larger 'cog,' the ale would probably be poured into the smaller 'bicker' for drinking. A cog is properly a large wooden vessel from which the Scottish peasants sup porridge, or kale, in common. In the case of porridge—which is made very thick—each spoons in his own pit till the dividing walls are broken down. A 'coggie' (*i.e.* a little cog) is a wooden porringer for one.

STANZA X. LINE 1. 'When Vulcan gies his *bellys* breath,' MSS. (A and B), and 1786. 6. 'At every *chap*,' MSS. (A and B), 1786, 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793.

STANZA XII. LINES 4–6 in MSS. (A and B), and 1786, read thus:—

'Wae worth *them for't*,
While healths gae round to him, wha, tight
Gies famous sport.'

STANZA XVIII. LINE 2. 'Accept a Bardie's *Aumble* thanks,' 1794.

STANZA XIX. LINE 1. 'Thee, Ferintosh! O sadly lost':—By an Act of the Scottish Parliament of 1690, Duncan Forbes of Culloden, in recognition of his services during Dundee's rebellion and in compensation for the damage done his lands by the rebels, obtained, on payment of a small sum in lieu of excise, a perpetual liberty to distil grain at his 'ancient brewery

SCOTCH of *aqua vite* of Ferintosh.' The privilege was withdrawn in
 DRINK 1785, over £20,000 being paid in compensation; when, of
 course, the price of whisky went up.

THE AUTHOR'S EARNEST CRY AND PRAYER

In the 1786 Edition the words 'The Right Honorable and Honorable' were inserted before 'the Scottish Representatives.' In the 1787 Edition Burns added a footnote:—'This was wrote before the Act anent the Scotch Distilleries, of session 1786; for which Scotland and the author return their most grateful thanks.' The Act superseded the duties on spirits by an annual tax on stills according to their capacity.

A MS. of the *Earnest Cry and Prayer*—MS. (A)—is included in the volume purchased by the Kilmarnock Committee in 1888; and the printer's copy—MS. (B)—is in the possession of the Irvine Burns Club.

The passage in Milton parodied in the motto is:—

'O fairest of creation! last and best . . .
 How art thou lost . . .—*Paradise Lost*, ix. 896, 900.

STANZA I. LINE 1. 'Ye Irish lords, ye knights *and* squires,' MS. (A) and 1793:—Certain Irish lords had Scottish seats in the House of Commons, while eldest sons of Scottish peers were ineligible. 5. 'To you a simple *Poet's* prayers,' 1794.

STANZA II. LINE 1. 'Alas my roupet Muse is haerse':—'Roupet' is said of a vocal state which suggests the utterance of a chicken with a cold.

STANZA III. LINE 1. 'Tell them *whas* hae the chief direction,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793.

STANZA V. LINE 3. 'Let posts an' pensions sink or *swoom*,' MSS. (A and B), and 1786. 4. 'Wi them wha grant *them*,' MSS. (A and B), and 1786. 6. 'Far better want *them*,' MSS. (A and B), and 1786.

STANZA VI. LINE 4. '*And* hum an' haw,' 1793.

STANZA VII. LINE 5. 'Triumphant, crushin't like a *mussle*,' EARNEST MS. (A); '*muscle*,' 1786. 6. 'Or *laimpit* shell,' MS. (A); CRY AND '*laimpet*,' MS. (B) and 1786. PRAYER

STANZA X. LINE 3. 'But could I like Montgomeries fight':—From the time of Sir John Montgomerie—ancestor of the Earls of Eglinton—who in 1388 vanquished Hotspur at Otterburne and took him prisoner, many of the main branch had won distinction in arms; and, when Burns wrote, their tradition was worthily maintained by Archibald, eleventh Earl of Eglinton, who held the rank of General in the army, and by his cousin, Colonel Montgomerie of Coilsfield, the 'sodger Hugh' of a subsequent stanza. 4. 'Or gab like Boswell':—James Boswell, biographer of Samuel Johnson, who, succeeding to the Auchinleck estate on the death of his father in 1782, for some time thereafter took an active part in politics at county meetings, and even aspired to represent Ayrshire in Parliament.

STANZA XIII. LINE 1. 'Dempster, a true blue Scot I'se warran':—George Dempster of Dunnichen; born at Dundee in February 1732; educated at St. Andrews and Edinburgh; called to the Scottish bar in 1755; a friend of Hume and other Scottish *literati*; sat as member for the Forfar and Fife Burghs from 1762 to 1790; devoted much attention to agriculture, concerning which he published several works; died 13th February 1818. 2. 'Thee, aith-detesting, chaste Kilkerran':—Sir Adam Fergusson, third baronet of Kilkerran; entered Parliament in 1774 as member for Ayrshire, but in 1780 was defeated by Colonel Hugh Montgomerie, and at this time represented Edinburgh; in 1796 laid claim to the earldom of Glencairn, but failed to establish his right to it; died 23rd September 1813. 3. 'An' that glib-gabbet *Highlan'* baron,' MSS. (A and B). 4. 'The Laird o' Graham':—James Graham, then Marquis of Graham; born 8th September 1755; elected M.P. for Richmond, Yorkshire, 11th September 1780; member for Great Bedwin, Wilts, from 1784 until, on the death of his father in 1790, he became third Duke of Montrose; was at this time a Lord of the Treasury under Pitt; subsequently held various important Ministerial and other offices; obtained the repeal of the Act of 1747 prohibiting the Highland costume; is described in Wrexall's *Memoirs* as possessing 'a ready elocution, sustained by all the confidence in himself

**EARNEST
CRY AND
PRAYER**

necessary for addressing the House'; died 30th December 1836. 6. 'Dundas his name':—Henry Dundas, the most distinguished Scottish statesman of his time; fourth son of Robert Dundas of Arniston, Lord President of the Court of Session; born 28th April 1742; at this time member for Midlothian, and Treasurer of the Navy under Pitt, one of whose best trusted colleagues he was; was created Viscount Melville 24th December 1802; and died 28th May 1811.

STANZA XIV. LINE 1. 'Erskine, a spunkie Norland billie':—Either Thomas Erskine, afterwards Lord Erskine (who, however, was not then in Parliament): or his elder brother, Henry Erskine, for a short time Lord Advocate under the Coalition Ministry; the chief rival of Dundas at the Scottish bar, whom he superseded as Lord Advocate, notwithstanding Dundas's boast:—'No one shall venture to take my place.' 2. 'True Campbells, Frederick and Ilay':—Lord Frederick Campbell, third son of John, fourth Duke of Argyll, was born in 1729; sat for the Glasgow Burghs from 1761 to 1780, and for Argyllshire from 1780 to 1799; appointed Lord Clerk Register for Scotland in 1768; died 8th August 1816. Sir Islay Campbell of Succoth was born 23d August 1734; succeeded Henry Erskine as Lord Advocate in 1784; represented the Glasgow District of Burghs from 1784 to 1789, when as Lord Succoth he was appointed Lord President of the Court of Session; author of several works on Scots Law; died 28th March 1823. 3. 'An' Livistone, the bauld Sir Willie':—Sir William Augustus Cunynghame, fourth Baronet, of Milncraig, Ayrshire, and Livingstone, Linlithgowshire, sat for Linlithgowshire; died 17th March 1828.

STANZA XV. This stanza was omitted by Burns from his press copy, and in MS. (A) is marked to be 'expunged.' The 'sodger Hugh' to whom it refers was Hugh Montgomerie of Coilsfield, who had seen service in the American War, and in 1778 became major of the Argyll Fencibles, of which Lord Frederick Campbell was colonel. He represented Ayrshire from 1780 to 1789; in 1793 became Major of the West Lowland Fencibles, and in 1795 Lieutenant-Governor of Edinburgh Castle; succeeded to the earldom of Eglinton on the death of his cousin Archibald, eleventh earl, in 1796; in 1806 was raised to the British Peerage as Baron

of Ardrossan; rebuilt Eglinton Castle, and displayed great EARNEST energy in the improvement and development of his property; CRY AND was an accomplished musician, and a composer of popular PRAYER tunes, among them *Lady Montgomerie's Reel* and *Ayrshire Lasses*; died 15th December 1819. LINE 1. 'My watchman stented,' *i.e.* 'erected' or 'set on high.' Cf. Ezekiel xxxiii. 2-3:—'When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man from among them, and set him for their watchman: if when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people,' *etc.*

STANZA XVI. LINE 1. '*Rouse up* my boys, exert your mettle,' MS. (A). 2. '*To get your mither back her kettle,*' deleted reading in MS. (A).

STANZA XVII. LINE 2. 'Her lost Militia fir'd her bluid':—The Militia Bill for Scotland was lost in 1782 by reason of the attempted insertion of a clause obnoxious to the Scottish representatives.

STANZA XXI. LINE 1. 'Tell yon guid bluid of auld Boconnock's':—The Premier, Pitt, was the grandson of Mr. Robert Pitt of Boconnock, Cornwall. 3. 'An' drink his health in auld Nanse Tinnock's':—A worthy old hostess of the Author's in Mauchline, where he sometimes studies politics over a glass of gude auld "Scotch Drink" (R. B.). See Prefatory Note to *The Holy Fair*, p. 328.

STANZA XXV. LINE 5. 'Your humble *Poet* sings an' prays,' 1794.

STANZA XXVI. LINE 2. 'See *Vines an' wines an' olives* rise,' MS. (A).

STANZA XXIX. LINE 1. 'But bring a *Scotchman* frae his hill,' MSS. (A and B), 1786, 1787 (1), and 1787 (2).

STANZA XXX. LINE 3. 'With *bloody hand* a welcome gies him,' MS. (A); '*hand*,' 1794.

STANZA XXXI. LINES 3-6. In the 1794 Edition these lines were changed:—

'Till *when ye speak ye aiblins bletcher;*
Yet deil mak matter!
 Freedom and Whisky gang thegither
 Tak aff your *whitter*':—

but the old reading was restored in the posthumous Edition of 1797.

THE HOLY FAIR

"Holy Fair" is a common phrase in the West of Scotland for a sacramental occasion' (R. B., in Edinburgh Editions). The satire is chiefly concerned with the 'tent-preaching' outside the church while the Communion services went on within. In Mauchline the preaching tent was pitched in the churchyard, whence a back entrance gave access to Nansie Tinnock's tavern; and the 'Sacrament' was observed once a year, on the second Sunday in August. Critics have classed the piece among the later ones in the Kilmarnock Edition; but in the ms. at Kilmarnock it is dated 'Autumn, 1785,' and it probably records the events of that year. This ascription supports the tradition that Burns recited it in the tavern where the scene is laid, to an audience which included Jean Armour, with whom there was no quarrel till the spring of 1786.

The introductory stanzas are modelled upon those of Fergusson's *Leith Races*. The metrical structure and the bob-wheel are those of *Leith Races* and *The Hallow Fair*. Both are simplified forms of the metrical structure and the bob-wheel in *Christ's Kirk on the Green*, *Peebles at the Play*, and Scott's *Jousting of Adamson and Sym*, and trace back clearly enough to the Thirteenth Century romance of *Sir Tristrem*, long ascribed to Thomas of Breveldeune:—

'The King had a doughter dere
That maiden Ysonde hight,
That gle was lef to here
And romaunce to rede aright.
Sir Tramtris hir gan lere
Tho with al his might
What alls pointis were,
To se the sothe in sight
To say.
In Yrlond was no knight
With Ysonde durst play.'

Docked of the bob-wheel, that never-failing device of the mediæval craftsman, the *Sir Tristrem* stave is identical with one which, imitated from a Monkish-Latin original, was popular all through the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, and long afterwards, and was used by Robert Henryson (*circa* 1420-1500), in that spirited and pleasing pastoral called *Robene and Makyne* :—

THE
HOLY
FAIR

' Robene sat on gud grene hill
Kepand a flock of fe;
Merry Makyne said him till
" Robene thow rew on me.
I haif the luvit lowd and still
Thir yeirls two or thre;
My dule is dern bot gif thow dill
Doubtless but dreid I de " :—

which Burns read in *The Ever Green* (1724). The fact is, indeed, that as written by the poet of *Christ's Kirk*, by Alexander Scott (1520?-1585?), by Allan Ramsay, by Burns himself in *A Dream* (pp. 63-74) and *The Ordination* (pp. 210-215), and even in such chapman's ware as *The Pack's Address*, the octave runs on two rhymes only :—

' Was nevir in Scotland hard nor sene
Sic dansing nor deray,
Nowthir at Faulkland on the grene
Nor Peblis at the play,
As wes of wowaris, as I wene,
At Chryst kirk on ane day.
Thair come our Kittels, weechin clene,
In thair new Kirtillis of gray
Fu' gay
At Christis Kirk of the Grene that day.'

This, too, is the form of the bob-wheel as it was shaped by the older masters. It appears as it is shaped in Burns in a modernized version of *Christ's Kirk*, printed in the First Part of Watson's *Choice Collection of Comie and Serious Scots Poems* (1706), and was adopted thence by Allan Ramsay in his continuation of that famous and

THE lively piece, in honour of whose author [more certainly
HOLY James v. than James I., but perhaps neither] it is called,
FAIR he says, the Royal Stanza. For the rest, it is proper to note
that, in *The Holy Fair* and *Halloween*, the structure of
the rhythmus is extremely loose and arbitrary. The classic
formula is approached within measurable distance in one
stanza (xv.) of the former piece; for there the rhymes are
no more than three, and of these the third pair makes a
passable assonance with the second—an approximation
common in Fergusson. But in the others the formula
shifts and starts with the need, the whim, or the oppor-
tunity of the moment; so that the stave has but a vague
appearance of correctness, and is reducible to no fixed
law.

The ms. at Kilmarnock—ms. (B)—agrees more
closely with the printed version than that in the British
Museum—ms. (A). Only eighteen stanzas, and the half
of what is now the 19th, are preserved in ms. (B), the re-
mainder having been torn out of the book. In ms. (B)
the transposition of the 19th and 20th stanzas is directed;
in ms. (A) it is done; it was not adopted after all. In
both these mss. the participial 'an' for 'ing' is often
used, and so is the termination 't' for 'd'. The printer's
copy—ms. (C)—is in the possession of the Irvine Club.

STANZA I. LINE 1. 'Twas on a simmer Sunday morn,' ms.
(A). 4. 'An' snuff the *callor* air,' mss. (B and C), and
1786. 5. 'The rising sun *our* Galston muirs,' 1786; 'o'er
Galston *moors*,' ms. (A); 'o'er,' ms. (B). 7. 'The hares were
hirplan down the *furrs*,' ms. (C) and 1786.

STANZA II. LINE 9. 'Fu' *braw* that day,' ms. (A).

STANZA III. LINE 3. 'Their *faces* withered, lang and thin,' ms.
(A). 7. 'An' wi' a *curcha* low did stoop,' ms. (A). 8. 'Fu'
hin that day,' ms. (A).

STANZA IV. LINE 1. 'Wi' bonnet aff, *Colhie*, sweet lass,'
ms. (A). 6. 'An' taks me by the *hands*,' deleted reading in
ms. (C); 'hands,' 1794; 'hanns,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and
1793. 7. 'Ye for my sake hae *broke* the feck,' ms. (A).

8. 'Of a' the ten *commands*,' deleted reading in MS. (C); **THE**
'*commands*,' 1794; '*commouns*,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793. **HOLY**
9. '*By night or day*,' MS. (A). **FAIR**

STANZA VI. In MS. (A) LINES 1-4 read thus :—

' *Quothie I'll get my tither coat,
An' on my Sunday sark;
An' meet ye in the yaird without
At op'nin o' the wark.*

STANZA VII. LINE 4. 'Are *spangin* owre the gutters,' deleted reading in MS. (A); '*o'er*,' MS. (B) and 1794.

STANZA VIII. LINE 3. 'A greedy glowr *the elder* throws,' MS. (A) :—The elder who 'officiated' at the collecting-plate, which stood at the entrance, was accustomed to wear a black bonnet. 7. 'Some *carrying dales*, some chairs an' stools,' 1794.

STANZA IX. LINE 3. '*Bet Barb—r there* an' twa three whores,' MSS. (A and B) :—The 'Racer Jess' of the line as printed was Janet Gibson, the half-witted daughter of Mrs. Gibson or 'Poesie Nansie' (see *The Jolly Beggars*); being fleet of foot, she often ran errands. She died in February 1813. 4. '*Sit blinkan* at the entry,' MSS. (A and B), and deleted reading in MS. (C). 5. 'Here sits a raw *of tittlin' jades*,' 1794; *tittling*, 1787 (2). 7. 'An' there a batch o' *wabster brauds*,' MSS. (A and B).

STANZA X. LINE 5. 'On this *side* sits a *goodly* swatch,' MS. (A); '*elect*'—which is deleted below '*goodly*' in MS. (A)—MSS. (B and C), and 1786. 6. 'Wi' *merry-beggin' faces*,' MS. (A). 7. 'On that a set o' chaps *on watch*,' MSS. (A and B). 8. 'Thrang *winkan at* the lasses,' MSS. (A and B).

STANZA XI. LINE 1. 'O happy is that man an' blest' :—*Psalm cxlvi*. Line 1 of Verse 2, Scottish Metrical Version. The verse was probably sung at the tent-preaching. 3. 'Whase ain dear lass that he *loves* best,' MS. (A).

STANZA XII. LINES 1-3 in MS. (A) read thus :—

' *But now* the congregation o'er
Is hush't wi' expectation
For Sawnie climbs the holy door.'

'*Sawnie*' in MS. (B), and deleted in MS. (C). Alexander

THE HOLY FAIR Moodie, minister of Riccarton, was born in 1722; ordained at Culross 20th February 1759; translated to Riccarton 30th December 1761; died 15th February 1799, and was succeeded as minister of the parish by his eldest son. He almost rivalled Russel of Kilmarnock in enforcing the 'terrors of the law.' But, notwithstanding affinities of doctrine and character, the headstrong violence of both divines involved them in that 'bitter black out-cast,' which is celebrated in *The Two Herds* (q.v.). In *The Kirk's Alarm*, Moodie is addressed as 'Singet Sawnie.' 4. 'Wi' tidings o' *salvation*,' all MSS. and 1786; changed in 1787 to '*damnation*,' on the suggestion of Dr. Hugh Blair. 7-9. In MS. (A) these lines read thus:—

'The vera sight o' *Sawnie's* face
Tae hell wi' *speed* had sent him
 For fright that day.'

STANZA XIV. LINE 5. '*Geordie begins his cauld harangues*,' MSS. (A and B):—George Smith, minister of Galston, son of William Smith of Cranston; ordained at Galston 3rd February 1778; D.D. (Glasgow) 1806; died 20th April 1823. Although really 'moderate' or 'New Light'—and here referred to in terms meant to be wholly laudatory—his theological attitude was rather variable. At an earlier period the orthodox, or 'Old Light,' party was inclined to set a certain reliance on him; but in *The Two Herds* it describes him as 'but a grey nick quill.' On the other hand, the 'New Light' party found him equally untrustworthy when it came to the pinch; and in the 'Irvine side' [or 'Cessnock side'] stanza of *The Kirk's Alarm* Burns, while allowing him the 'figure' of manhood, affirms that even his friends 'dare na say' he has 'mair.'

STANZA XV. Lines 1, 2 in MS. (A) read thus:—

'It's no nae gospel truth divine
Tae cant o' sense an' reason.'

4. '*Is a' clean out o' season*,' MS. (A). 6. 'Or some auld wicked heathen,' MSS. (A and B).

STANZA XVI. LINE 3. 'For *sairie* [not 'Fairy,' as usually printed] Willie Water-fit,' MS. (A):—William Peebles, minister of Newton-on-Ayr; son of a draper at Inchtute, Perthshire; born about 1752; schoolmaster at Inchtute, and afterwards

assistant minister at Dundonald; ordained at Newton-on-Ayr 25th June 1778; clerk of the Presbytery of Ayr 1782; D.D. (American) 1795; died 11th October 1826. Author of '*The Great Things which the Lord hath done for this Nation*, in two Sermons, preached on 5th November 1788'—[the second containing a veiled but obvious allusion to the doctrines of Dr. Macgill as heinous in themselves and inconsistent with his subscription to the Standards: see *The Kirk's Alarm*—] 'to which is subjoined *An Ode to Liberty*,' Kilmarnock: Printed by J. Wilson [Burns's printer] 1788; *Sermons, with Hymns*, Edinburgh 1794; *The Universality of Pure Christian Worship: A Sermon*, Ayr 1796; *The Crisis, or the Progress of Revolutionary Principles*, Edinburgh 1803 and 1804; and *Odes and Elegies*, Glasgow 1810. He also published [anonymously] '*Burnomania*: the Celebrity of Robert Burns considered in a Discourse addressed to all real Christians of every Denomination, to which are added Epistles in Verse respecting Peter Pindar, Burns, &c., 1811': it especially condemns *The Holy Fair* and *Tam o' Shanter*. Peebles was a leader of the orthodox party in the Presbytery. In doctrine and sentiment his sermons are studiously correct, as they are invariably pompous in style. Burns makes a withering allusion to his *Ode to Liberty* in the 'Poet Willie' stanza of *The Kirk's Alarm*; and in *The Two Herds* he appears as 'Peebles Shaul.' 7. 'Common-sense,' while generally used for the New-Light party, is here traditionally supposed to mean Burns's friend, Dr. Mackenzie. 8. '*An's* aff an' up the Cowgate,' MS. (A).:—'A street so called which faces the tent in Mauchline' (R. B. in Edinburgh Editions). 9. '*In haste* that day,' MS. (A).

STANZA XVII. LINE 1. 'Wee Miller niest the guard relieves':—'"Wee Miller," the assistant minister at St. Michael's' (R. B. in a copy of the 1786 Edition in the British Museum). Alexander Millar, who was short and exceeding stout, was presented to the parish of Kilmaurs, 9th April 1787; but, probably on account in part of this unflattering allusion to him, his settlement was bitterly opposed by the parishioners, who denied him access to preach, and abstained without exception from attending service when the call was moderated. He nevertheless was ordained 8th May 1788; and died 22nd December 1804. 8. '*Like haffins-ways* o'ercomes him,' 1794.

THE
HOLY
FAIR

THE STANZA XVIII. LINE 1. 'Now but and ben':—The entrance
HOLY to the Scottish cottage was at the kitchen end, and the
FAIR visitor passed through the 'but' or outer apartment into the
'ben' or inner one.

STANZA XIX. LINE 7. 'It never fails on *drinking deep*,'
1794.

STANZA XX. LINE 2. '*Their lowan drowth tas quench*,'
MS. (A). 4. '*An' steer about the punch*,' MS. (A). 6. '*They're*
making observations,' 1794. 8. '*An' forming assignations*,'
1786.

STANZA XXI. LINE 4. 'Black Russell is na *sparin*,' 1787 (1),
1787 (2), and 1793; '*Black Jock he is no sparin*,' MS. (A):—
John Russel, then minister of the chapel-of-ease, Kilmarnock, a
native of Moray, born about 1740; for some time parochial
teacher at Cromarty; ordained at Kilmarnock 30th March 1774;
translated to the second charge of Stirling 18th January 1800;
died at Stirling 23rd February 1817, in his seventy-seventh
year. Author of preface to *Fraser's Sermons on Sacramental*
Occasions, Kilmarnock 1785; *The Nature of the Gospel*
delineated in a Sermon, August 1796; *The Reason of our Lord's*
Agony, a sermon, Stirling 1801; and four sermons published
in a posthumous volume of sermons by his son, Rev. John
Russel of Muthill, Glasgow 1826. Russel was a Calvinist of
the sternest type, with a visage dark and morose and a
tremendous voice: both combining to heighten the effect of
his messages of wrath. As a schoolmaster he earned an
altogether unique repute for severity, and astounding illus-
trations of the mingled dread and hatred cherished towards
him by his scholars in Cromarty are given by Hugh Miller
in his *Scenes and Legends of the North of Scotland*. Others
relate that, being off duty, he was not without a certain
geniality, and even humour. Over his parishioners he exer-
cised a discipline well-nigh as rigid as that which he had
maintained in his school. Such was the awe inspired by his
mere presence that when, on Sunday afternoons, armed
with a formidable cudgel, he began his wonted rounds in
pursuit of Sabbath-breaking strollers, his appearance in the
street was the signal for an instant breaking-up and a dis-
appearing within-doors of gossiping groups. Russel is one of
Burns's *Two Herds*, and there are uncomplimentary allusions

26.
 In humber, we will an' aw,
 Begins to jow an' soon,
 Some swaggi's name, the best they doun,
 Some wait the afternoon.
 At that's the billies halt a blink,
 It's a few sleep their shoon;
 The fath' an' hope an' love an' drink,
 They're a' in famous turn.

27. For each that day.
 How many hearts this day converts,
 O' sinners and o' Rascals!
 Their hearts c'fane, gon night an' gone,
 As left as my flesh is a,
 There's some are fad o' sin,
 There's some are fad o' drink,
 An' monie jobs that day begun,
 May end in Naughtman's den.

Address to the Deil.

O Prince, O chief of many throned powers,
 That bid th' embold' d' Desap' to war,
 Milton.

Thou, whatever tide just thou!
 hild Hornie, Satan, Kith, o' Clabie,
 it's in yon cavern grim an' foety,
 Spanges about the brumstone cootie,
 Hear me, with Hangu, for a we,
 An' let poor, damned, wretched be;
 I'm sure some' fildes it can see,
 To shelp an' fildes fildes like me,
 An' bread fildes!

[illegible]

They fling the imposture in angry rage,
And in lock yards renew their tangle.
Those counted ^{with} ^{the} wishes of dead,
Those counted ^{with} ^{the} ^{dead} ^{how} ^{that} ^{dead}

Those counter wires, we laid on bare,
May plunge an' blunge the town on vain;
Ere Oct! the yellow trepan's torn,
An' sauter, wal-pint Hawkes's gone.

Thence, my tie knots ^{make} ~~and~~ ^{As well's the Bill}
On young gentlemen, fond, keen & wroth;
When the best watchmen is the lough,
So instant make no worth a lough. ^{They can't trap wit,}

When shows itself the mawny hood,
 An' float the jingling icy boord,
 Then, Water deeps haunt the foord.
 An' might Trav bes an' aloud
 To trust aspiration.

An' aft' your mase-beaving, I thank,
Deed' the weight that he an' drunk is.
The blizzan, wift, mysterious monnies
Till in some miry plough he jumps.

When maiden is myrtle words and gifts
In storms an' tempests raise you up -
Some cash, or eat, your rage mean flap,
O the youngest & sweetest ye wed with
He it may be to rise
Or, strange to tell!

Languor on Eden's some part
 When youthful lovers first were pair'd,
 In all the Soul of Love they shar'd,
 Sweet on the fragrant, flow'ry fair'd
 Then you, we add, snick-drawing dag!
 We came to Paradise incog.

An' d on man a wisp o' smoke, (Black is your fa')
 An' gae the infant wairld a fog, Maist ruin'd a'.
 Dye mind that day, when in a bizz,
 The iuch duds, an' rusted gizz,
 He did present your smokin' pipes, Mang better so th-
 An' shanted on the man o' the day, Your phlegm' jake?
 An' haug' gat him i' your throat,
 An' brack him out o' house an' ha'
 While fanks an' botches did him gall, He better claw-
 An' laug'd his ill tongue'd, wicked stead
 But your doings to rehearse, Was waist ava?
 His wily fanks an' fustion force,
 An' that day, michty did your fanks, Down to the dore,
 Was ding a' fustion tongue, or to th- In fustion or? Chyme
~~He was a fustion tongue, or to th-~~ I hang ye in linkan.
 A linkan o' fustion rancor, dunsion,
 Some luckless hour will send him linkan,
 But jist! he'll turn a corner linkan, (Say your black fust,
 An' cheat you yet.
 But fare you weel, gude Nickie fust,
 I wad ye tak a thought an' men!
 Ye aiblins micht— I donna ken—
 + I'll hae a fustie—
 I'm wae to think o'— an' den.
 So I'm for your fustie.

* The Million, 1760

to him in *The Ordination*, *The Kirk's Alarm*, and the *Epistle to John Goldie*. 5. 'His piercing words like *two-edg'd* swords,' ms. (A). :—The change to '*Highlan*' may have been suggested by Russel's northern origin. 8. 'Our vera sauls does harrow':—'Shakespeare's *Hamlet*' (R. B.).

THE
HOLY
FAIR

STANZA XXII. LINE 3. '*Wha's* raging flame an' scorching heat,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793; '*Wha's*,' 1794; '*raging* an' scorching,' 1786. 6. 'An' think they hear it *roaring*,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793. 8. ''Twas but some neebor *snoring*,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793.

STANZA XXIII. LINE 5. 'How *yill* gaed round in cogs an caups,' ms. (A):—For 'cog,' see Note to *Scotch Drink* (ante, p. 323). The ale-caup was a wooden mug about the size of a half-pint pot. 6. 'Among the furms *and* benches,' 1787 (2). 7. 'An' bread and cheese frae women's laps,' ms. (A).

STANZA XXVI. LINES 1-2 in ms. (A) read thus:—

'Then *Robin Gib-wo'* weary jow,
Begins to *clink* and croon.'

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL

GILBERT BURNS states that his brother first repeated the *Address to the Deil* in the winter 'following the summer of 1784,' while they 'were going together with carts of coal to the family fire'; but it is clear from Burns's letter to Richmond, 12th February 1786, that he misdates the poem by a year. The *Address* is, in part, a good-natured burlesque of the Miltonic ideal of Satan; and this is effected 'by the introduction,' to use the words of Gilbert Burns, 'of ludicrous accounts and representations,' from 'various quarters,' of that 'august personage.' Burns in his despairing moods was accustomed to feign the strongest admiration for Milton's Arch-Fiend and his dauntless superiority to his desperate circumstances; and his farewell apostrophe, although it takes the form of an exclamation of pity—and was accepted merely, as such by the too-too senti-

ADDRESS mental yet austere Carlyle—is in reality a satiric thrust
TO THE at the old Satanic dogma.

DEIL The six-line stave in *rime couée*, built on two rhymes, of the *Address to the Deil* 'was borrowed from the Troubadours, and freely used in Mediæval English during the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries' (thus—after Guest—the late Professor Minto in a note, unsigned, on 'The Metres of Burns,' in *The Scots*—now *The National—Observer* for March 23rd, 1889). Guest gives no quotations from the Troubadour minstrelsy, but his statement can be amply verified. The earliest signed example is the work of the first-known Troubadour, William ix., Count of Poitiers and Duke of Guienne (1071-1127); and, on the lips of the famous Bernard de Ventadour, it may very well have come to England in the train of his grandchild, Eleanor of Poitou, wife of that Henry of Anjou whose accession to the English throne (1154) made London the literary as well as the political capital of Aquitaine. Two of the nine examples extant of Count William's muse are in this stave :—

' Farai un vers de dreit nen,
 Non er de mi ni d'autra gen,
 Non er d'amor ni de joven
 Ni de ren au,
 Qu'enans fo trobats en durmen
 Sobre cheveu.'

With differences, too, the stave is found in the *Cancioneiro Portuguez da Vaticana*, which was written by the Troubadours attached to the courts of Diniz II. and other Kings of Portugal in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries; while the Trouvère, Colins de Chanpiaux (Thirteenth Century), varies it thus :—

' L'autrier foris d'Angiers alai
 Dedusant par un tans gai :
 Trovai dame a euer vrai,
 Cors out ranvoisi.

Bele et blonde, bien le sai :
Si chantoit ensai.

'Amors, amors, amors
Mi demeine, demeine,
Tout ensai demeine
Mon cueret joll.'

ADDRESS
TO THE
DEIL

Another example in the dialect of Northern France is quoted in an Appendix to the *Origines de la Poésie Lyrique en France au Moyen Age* of M. Alfred Jeanroy (1889):

'A definement d'esteit
Lairai ma jolietait ;
Yvers vient tout apresteis,
Froidure repaire ;
J'ai trop an folie estait,
Si m'an voil retraire.

Eminently aristocratic in its inception, it presently became a rhythmus for the people, with which artists in prosody, as Chaucer and Henryson, in the end disdained to deal. Thus, in the Twelfth Century, one Hilary, a monk of Paris, falls into it (*Versus et Ludi*, 1830) in an *Historia de Daniel representanda* and elsewhere:—

'Danielem nos vidimus
Pronum suis numinibus.
Eeca detur leonibus
Quia sprevit
Quod Babilonis Darius
Rex decrevit.'

Thus, too, it first appears in English in a Thirteenth Century love-song (anonymous) contained in ms. Harl. 2253, which Mr. Wright ascribes to the year 1307, or thereabouts:—

'A wayls whyt as whallës bon,
A grein in golde that godly shon,
A tortle that myn herte is on,
In tounës trewë ;
Hirë gladshipe nes never gon,
Whil y may glewë.'

ADDRESS It occurs again in the same *ms.*, but with a difference in
TO THE the bob-wheel:—

DEIL

'Ase y me rod this ender day,
 By grenë wode to sechë play,
 Mid herte y thohte al on a may,
 Suestest of allë thingë;
 Kythe, ant ichou tellë may
 Al of that suetë thingë.'

It is the stanza of *Octavian Imperator*, a Fourteenth Century rendering (for recitation) from the French:—

'Jhesu, that was with spere y stounge
 And for us hard and sore y swounge,
 Gladeflly bothe old and youngë
 With wytte honëst,
 That wylled a whylë stere her tounge
 And herken [m]y gest.'

Four of the *York Plays* are written in it; it crops up, with a difference, in the *Ludus Coventrie* (1468); and it is used in the *Towneley Mysteries*, the *ms.* of which appears to belong to the end of the Fifteenth Century. There is small doubt that it was known to Mediæval Scotland, but the first Scotsman whose name is attached to it is Sir David Lindsay, in Part i. of *Ane Pleasant Satire of the Three Estaitis* (1540):—

'There is ane thing that I wald speir,
 Quhat sall I do quhen scho cumis heir?
 For I knaw nocht the craft perqueir
 Of lufferis gyn;
 Thairfoir, at lenth, ye mon me leir
 How to begin.'

It appears in various guises in *The Bannatyne MS.* (1568):—now composed of one decasyllabic line and three octosyllabics, and with the hemistichs cut down by the half, fitted to a single rhyme, and adapted to a refrain, as in Montgomerie's *Regrate of His Unhappie Luv*:—

'Irkit I am with langum luv's lair,
 Oursett with inwart sieking sair,

For in the presone of Despair

I ly,

Seing ilk wicht gettis sum weilfair

Bot I' ;

ADDRESS

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DEIL

now with the four octosyllabics in present use, but burdened with a double refrain, as in this by Alexander Scott :—

'It cumis you luvaris to be laill,
Off body, hairt, and mind alhaill,
And thocht ye with your ladyis daill,
 Ressoun,
Bot and you faith and lawty faill,
 Tressoun' ;

now of an exact syllabic equality with the later form, but tagged with a refrain, as in these verses by an innominate :—

'My hairt repois the and the rest,
In dolour be na langer drest,
Sen thow hes it thow luvis best
 To beit thy baill,
Quhilk is ane grund the gudliest,
 With littill daill' ;

now with the four octosyllabic verses adapted, as thus, to a monosyllabic bob-wheel :—

'Pansing of lufe quhat lyf it leidis,
My will express with ressoun pleidis,
And nocht I ynd to stop their feidis
 Plane,
Bot lufe to reput best reimeid is
 Vane' ;

and now precisely as in the *Address to the Deil* :—

'In somer when flouris will smell,
As I fure our fair fieldis and fell,
Allone I wanderit by ane well,
 On Weddinsday ;
I met a cleir vadir kell,
 A weilfaird may ;

AGANIS and again, in a *Complaint aganis Cupaid*, signed Alexander
TO THE Scott :—
DEIL

'Quhous could I wyt of my mischance
 Bot Cupaid King of variance ?
 Thy court, without considerance,
 Quhen I it knew,
 Or evir made the observance,
 Sa far I rew.'

Sir Richard Maitland (1496-1586) uses a variation in his
Aganis the Theiris of Liddisdail, and also in *Solace in
 Age*, written about 1570, shortly after he was deprived of
 his lands of Lethington (*Poems*, Maitland Club, 1830) :—

'Thocht that this world be verie strange,
 And theiffes hes done my rowmis range
 And teynd my fald,
 Yet wald I leif, and byde me change ;
 Thoch I be ald.'

It is found in *Ane Ballat of the Scripture* in the book of
Gude and Godly Ballats, first published in 1578 (these
Ballats, be it remembered, were pious parodies of popular
 songs, and were made to popular tunes) :—

'Richt sairly musing in my mynde,
 For pity soir my heart is pynde,
 When I remember on Christ so kynde
 That sault me :
 Nane could me saif from thyme till Ynde
 Bot only he.'

It is not denoted in King James's *Ane Schorte Treatise
 Containing some Reulis and Cautelis to be Observit and
 Echewit in Scottis Poesie* (1585). Indeed, it fell into dis-
 use with the decline of popular poetry after the Reforma-
 tion, the next known example being the famous *Piper of
 Kilbarchan* (see *post*, Prefatory Note to *Poor Maike's Elegy*,
 p. 345), 'standard Habbie,' as Ramsay calls it : which is
 said to have been written about 1640 ; which was long
 popular as a broadside ; and which, reprinted, with other
 examples, all derivatives, in Watson's First and Second

Parts (1706, 1709), may fairly be said to have begun the process of nationalisation. That process was completed by Allan Ramsay, who took the stave straight from Watson and the Piper; used it in *Elegies*—on Maggie Johnston (1711), John Cowper (1714), and Lucky Wood (1717)—in *Lucky Spence's Last Advice*, in *Familiar Epistles*, and the like—all sold as chap-books, and all widely read and sedulously imitated. It was written by Hamilton of Gilbertfield (see *post*, p. 344); a classic in it (anonymous), some forty stanzas long, is *The Merry Wives of Musleburgh, at their meeting together to welcome Meg Dickson aftir her loup from the Ladder* (1724); it so took the Scottish ear that by Fergusson's time, as may be seen in Ruddiman's *Weekly Magazine* (1768-1784), it had become the common inheritance of all such Scotsmen as could rhyme. Through Fergusson, who did his sprightliest work in it, and John Mayne (1759-1836)—author of *The Siller Gun* (1777), who wrote it by cantos—it passed into the hands of Burns, who put it to all manner of uses and informed it with all manner of sentiments: in ambitious and serious poetry like *The Vision*; in *Addresses*—to a Louse, a Mountain Daisy, the Toothache, the Devil, a Haggis, Scotch Drink, to name but these; in *Elegies*—upon Tam Samson and Poor Mailie and Captain Matthew Henderson; in such satires as *Death and Dr. Hornbook* and *Holy Willie's Prayer*; and in a series of *Epistles* of singular variety and range. His thoughts and fancies fell naturally into the pace which it imposes: as Dryden's into the heroic couplet, as Spenser's into the stanza of *The Faerie Queen*. Indeed, he cannot keep it out of his head, and his Alexandrines often march to the tune of it:—

'And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced
By Heaven's command'—

'And "Let us worship God," he says
With solemn air'—

'And curse the ruffian's aim, and mourn
Thy hapless fate.'

ADDRESS
TO THE
DEIL

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL 'Tis small wonder, therefore, that a very large proportion of his non-lyrical achievement is set forth in it, or that Wordsworth should choose it for the stave of his memorial verses.

A ms. of the *Address*—ms. (A)—is included in the book purchased by the Kilmarnock Committee: it lacks the Miltonic motto. The printer's copy—ms. (B)—is in the possession of the Irvine club.

STANZA II. LINE 3. 'I'm sure sma' comfort it can gie,' ms. (A).

STANZA III. LINE 3. 'An' tho' yon howe het hole's thy hame,' ms. (A).

STANZA IX. 6. 'Owre howkit dead':—Cf. Allan Ramsay, *The Gentle Shepherd* (1725), ii. 2:—

'At midnight hours o'er the kirk-yard she raves,
And howks unchristened weans out of their graves';

and *Tam o' Shanter* (p. 323), 'Coffins stood round,' etc.

STANZA X. LINE 3. 'For O! the yellow treasure's taen,' 1787 (2); 'Och,' MSS. (A and B). 4. 'By wicket skill,' ms. (A); 'cantraip skill,' deleted reading in ms. (A). 5. 'An dautiet, twal-pint Haukie's game,' ms. (A); 'game,' ms. (B), and 1786.

STANZA XI. in ms. (A), originally read thus:—

'Thence knots are coosten, spells contriv'd,
An' the brisk bridegroom, newly wiv'd,
Just as the kittle point arriv'd,
Fond, keen, an' croose,
Is by some spitefu' jad depriv'd
O's warhlum's use.'

Of Lines I and 2 the final reading in ms. (A) is:—

'Thence mystic knots breed great abuse
To young guidmen, fond, keen, and croose';

and in ms. (B), 'breed' is a deleted reading. 5. 'Is made as useless as a louse,' final reading in ms. (A).

STANZA XII. LINE 5. 'An' nightly trav'lers are allur'd,' ms. (A).

STANZA XIII. LINE 3. 'The *dancin*, curst, mischievous monkeys,' MS. (A). ADDRESS TO THE

STANZA XV. in MS. (A) originally read thus :—

DEIL

'Lang syne in Eden's *happy scene*
When strappin Edie's ['Adam's' deleted] *days were green,*
An' Eve was like my bonie Jean
My dearest part,
A dancin, sweet, young, handsome queen
Wi' guileless heart.'

The substituted stanza — 'bonie yard,' by the way, is Fergusson's—which, as printed, is inserted at the end of the poem in MS. (A), was no doubt written after the difficulty with Armour.

STANZA XVII. LINE 3. 'Ye did present your *ugly phiz*,' MS. (A).

STANZA XIX. LINE 3. 'Sin' that day Michael did you pierce':—'*Vide Milton, Book 6th*' (R. B.)

STANZA XX. LINE 2. '*That Robin's* rantin, *sugarin*, drinkin,' MS. (A).

THE DEATH AND DYING WORDS OF POOR

MAILIE

ONE of the few pieces written before 1784. Burns 'had, partly by way of frolic, bought a ewe and two lambs from a neighbour, and she was tethered in a field adjoining the house at Lochlie. He and I were going out with our teams, and our two younger brothers to drive for us, at mid-day, when Hugh Wilson, a curious-looking, awkward boy, clad in plaiding, came to us with much anxiety in his face, with the information that the ewe had entangled herself in the tether, and was lying in the ditch. Robert was much tickled with Huoc's appearance and postures on the occasion. Poor Mailie was set to rights, and when we returned from the plough in the evening he repeated to me her *Death and Dying Words* pretty much in the way they now stand.'—GILBERT BURNS.

POOR MAILIE The 'Dying Words' of Poor Mailie, though in a different metre, trace back without doubt to the *Last Dying Words of Benny Heck* (Watson's First Part), written by Hamilton of Gilbertfield (1665?-1757), who paraphrased and metricized Blind Harry's *Wallace* :—

"Alas! alas!" quo Bonnie Heck,
 "On former days when I reflect!
 I was a Dog much in respect
 For doughty Deed:
 But now I must hing by the Neck
 Without Remead."

It was imitated in Ramsay's *Lucky Spence's Last Advice* and *The Last Speech of a Wretched Miser*, and established a convention in Scots verse.

The poem was entered in the *First Common Place Book* in June 1786—ms. (A). It was also inscribed in a book, of which two leaves of beautiful manuscript—ms. (B)—are in the possession of the representatives of the late ex-Provost Brown, Paisley; and it appears in the book purchased by the Kilmarnock Committee—ms. (C).

LINE 2. 'Were ae day nibblin on the tether,' ms. (A).
 4. 'And *d'er* she warsl'd in the ditch,' mss. (A and B).
 6. 'When Hughoc he came doytin by':—'A neebour herdcallant about three-fourths as wise as other folk' (R. B. in 1786, *etc.*); 'Hughoc was an odd, glowran, gapin callan about three-fourths,' *etc.* (R. B. in ms. [B]). 24. 'To scores o' lambs and packs o' woo,' 1787 (2). 27. 'An' now my dying charge I *gas* him,' 1786. 31. 'But gie them gude *het* milk their fill,' ms. (A). 39. 'So may they like their *auld* forbears,' ms. (A). 47. 'An' warn him ay *at ridin time*,' mss. (A, B and C), and 1786. 59. 'An' when *ye ever mind* your mither,' ms. (A); '*ye*,' ms. (C) and 1786. 66. 'An' clos'd her *d'en* among the dead,' 1794.

POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY

THIS delightful piece of sympathy and fun does not appear in the *First Common Place Book*. It was probably

composed after Burns had determined on publication.

POOR
MAILIE'S
ELEGY

The six-line stave in *rime couée* (see *ante*, p. 336), was adapted to elegiac purposes, by the use of a refrain which ends in 'dead,' by Sir Robert Sempill of Beltrees (1596?-1661?) in *The Piper of Kilbarchan* :—

'Kilbarchan now may say Alace!
For sho hes lost her *Game and Grace*,
Bayth *Trizie* and the *Maiden Trace*;
Bot quhat remeid?
For na man can supply his place—
Hab Simson's deid.'

Sir Robert is also credited with an *Epitaph* on Sanny Briggs, which runs on precisely similar lines. Both are printed in Watson's *Choice Collection*, which includes, besides, an *Epitaph* on William Lithgow, a drunken Writer to the Signet, closely imitated from the pair of Sempills; and the tradition is observed in Ramsay's *Elegies* (see *ante*, p. 341), and in Fergusson's *On David Gregory* and *On the Death of Scotch Music* (which last perhaps suggested *Poor Mailie*). By Burns's time, in fact, the elegiac formula had become completely Scotticized, and had entered into the common stock-in-trade of rhyming Scottish men.

An early draft—ms. (A)—follows *The Death* in a ms. in the possession of the representatives of the late ex-Provost Brown of Paisley. The piece is also inscribed in the book at Kilmarnock—ms. (B). ms. (A) differs so much from the printed version, and affords so capital an illustration of the writer's methods that we give it in full :—

'Lament, in rhyme, a' ye wha dow,
Your elbuck ruban elaw your pow,
Poor Robin's ruin'd, stick an' stow,
Past a' remead:
His only darlin, ain pet yowe
Poor Mailie's dead.

'Ochon, alais, his luckless lot!
In losin her he lost a note;

POOR
MAILIE'S
ELEGY

He fell'd her lambs to buy a coat
A mournin weed :
He's saxpence poorer than a groat
Sin' Mailie's dead.

'She was nae get o' runted rams,
Wi' woo like gaita, an' legs like trams;
She was the flow'r o' Fairlie lambs,
A famous breed !
Now Robin grestan chows the hams
O' Mailie dead !

'O fortune, how thou does us mook !
He thought in her he saw a stock
Would heave him up wi' hyvie folk
To cook his head :
Now a' his hopes are gane like smoke,
For Mailie's dead.

'Wae worth,' etc.,

as in the text, the leaf ending in the middle of the stanza.

STANZA I. LINE 3. '*Poor Robin's* fate is at a close,' MS. (B).

STANZA II. LINE 3. '*Or gar poor Robin, dowie, wear,*' MS. (B); '*make,*' 1786.

STANZA III. LINE 1. '*Ay whare he gaed* she trotted by him,' MS. (B).

STANZA IV. LINE 1. '*I wat she was a yowe o' sense,*' MS. (B). 5. '*Now Robin* lanely keeps the spence,' MS. (B).

STANZA V. LINE 1. '*At times* he wanders up the howe,' MS. (B). 2. '*Comes bleatin to him, owre the knowe,*' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794.

STANZA VI. in a deleted version—MS. (B)—reads, as does STANZA III. in MS. (A):—'*She was nae get,*' etc. William Burness was for some time gardener at Fairlie House, Ayrshire.

STANZA VII. LINE 1. '*Wae worth that man* wha first did shape,' 1786.

STANZA VIII. LINE 2. '*Your chanters tune*':—In Lowland Scotland the bagpipe was at one time as common as it is and was in the Highlands. Its disuse was due to the action of the Kirk authorities in connexion with dancing.

EPISTLE TO JAMES SMITH

THE recipient of this epistle was the son of Robert Smith, merchant, Mauchline. He was born 1st March 1766, and was thus six years younger than the poet. He lost his father early, and, perhaps by reason of his stepfather's rigid discipline, grew something regardless of restraint. He was, however, clever, affectionate, and witty; secured the poet's especial esteem by his loyalty during the Armour troubles; was a member of the Court of Equity (or Bachelors' Club, which met at the Whitefoord Arms), and the subject of a humorous epitaph (see *post*, vol. ii.) which need not be interpreted too literally; for some time kept a small draper's shop in Mauchline; in 1787 became partner in the Avon Printworks, Linlithgowshire; and about 1788 went to Jamaica, where he died. Several letters to him are included in Burns's correspondence. His sister's 'wit' is celebrated in *The Belles of Mauchline*. The *Epistle* was probably written early in 1786, before Burns had quite decided to attempt publication. In the book purchased by the Kilmarnock Committee the *ms.* gives some interesting variations from the printed version. The third stanza is wanting, and probably, therefore, was not included in the *Epistle* as sent to Smith, but was added in transcribing for the press.

STANZA IV. LINE 5. '*Will ye lay-bye a wee whyle's time,*' deleted reading in *ms.*

STANZA V. in the *ms.* reads as follows:—

' Some rhyme because they like to clash,
 An' gie a neebor's name a lash;
 An' some (vain thought) for needfu' cash;
 An' some for fame;
 For me, I string my dogg-rel trash
 For fun at hame';

but this reading is deleted, and the printed one is substituted, with the exception of '*kintra*' for '*countra*' in Line 3.

EPISTLE STANZA IX. LINE 1. 'Then *farewel* hopes o' laurel-boughs,'
TO JAMES MS., 1786, 1787 (1), 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794; but in the 1786
SMITH 'of' for 'o.' 5. 'An' *tell* the lanely heights an' howes,' MS.

STANZA XI. LINE 2. 'Just now I'm livin, sound an' *heal*,'
MS.; 'and,' 1794. 3-6. A deleted reading of these lines in
the MS. is as follows:—

' Then top an' main-top *hoist* the sail
All hands aloft,
An' large before Enjoyment's gale
Let's *send adrift*.'

STANZA XII. LINE 3. 'An' pleasure is the magic wand,'
MS.

STANZA XIV. LINE 5. 'An' *farewel* dear bewitching woman,'
MS., which has '*farewel*' instead of 'fareweel' in the preceding
lines of this stanza.

STANZA XVII. LINE 5. 'And *eye* the barren hungry hut,'
MS.

STANZA XVIII. LINE 5. 'Then *cosie* in some *canie* place,'
MS.

STANZA XXIII. LINE 1. 'A title, Dempster merits it':—
George Dempster of Dunnichen, M.P. (See *ante*, Notes to
The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer, p. 325). A deleted
reading, Lines 2, 3 in the MS., is as follows:—

' Honor, gie that *tae* Willie Pitt
If he goes on to merit it.'

STANZA XXVI. LINE 1. 'O' ye *guid* folk *wha* live by rule,'
MS.

STANZA XXVIII. LINE 4. 'The *rantin* squad,' MS.; '*ramb-*
ling,' 1786; and '*rattlin*,' 1794. Not impossibly '*rambling*,'
in the 1786 Edition, was a misprint for '*ranting*.'

A DREAM

THE outspokenness of this address—partly traceable to
the poet's latent Jacobitism—was distasteful to some of
his loyal patrons, who advised that, unless it were
modified, it should not be retained in the 1787 Edition.

But, as he wrote to Mrs. Dunlop (30th April), he was A DREAM
 'not very amenable to counsel' in such a matter; and, his sentiments once published, he scorned either to withdraw them or to dilute his expression. The author of the *Ode* here ridiculed was Thomas Warton. For the stave of *A Dream*, see *ante* (p. 329), the Prefatory Note to *The Holy Fair*.

STANZA I. LINE 4. 'A humble *Bardie* wishes,' 1786, 1787 (1), and 1787 (2):—The variation 'Poet' in Editions '93 and '94 is preferable in view of 'bardship' in the following line.

STANZA II. LINE 2. 'By *many* a lord an' lady,' 1786, 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793.

STANZA IV. LINE 7. 'And now the third part *of* the string,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794. 9. 'Than did ae day':—Before the American Colonies were lost.

STANZA VII. LINE 8. 'Abridge your *bonny* Barges,' 1787 (2):—In the spring of 1785 it had been proposed to reduce the Navy.

STANZA IX. LINE 4. 'A simple *Poet* gies ye,' 1793 and 1794. 5. 'Thae *bonny* Bairn-time Heaven has lent,' 1787 (2).

STANZA X. LINE 1. 'For you, young Potentate o' Wales':—Afterwards George IV.

STANZA XI. LINE 1. 'Yet aft a ragged *cowt*': been known,' 1787 (2). 5. 'There him at Agincourt wha shone':—'King Henry v.' (R. B.) 7. 'And yet, wi' funny queer Sir John':—'Sir John Falstaff, *vide* Shakespeare' (R. B.).

STANZA XII. 'For you, right rev'rend Osnaburg':—Frederick Augustus, Duke of York and Albany, second son of George III.; born 16th August 1763; elected to the Bishopric of Osnaburg in infancy (1764); had abandoned the title in 1784, on being created Duke of York and Albany; was appointed Commander-in-Chief in 1798; but in 1809 was compelled by the Clarke Scandals to resign. He died 5th January 1827.

STANZA XIII. LINE 3. 'A glorious galley stem *and* stern,' 1786, 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793:—'Alluding to the newspaper account of a certain Royal sailor's amour' (R. B.). The royal sailor was Prince William Henry—appointed captain in the Navy 10th April 1786—afterwards Duke of Clarence, and

A DREAM finally King William IV. His connexion with Dorothy Jordan did not begin till 1790.

STANZA XIV. LINE 1. 'Ye lastly *bonny* blossoms a', 1787 (2).

THE VISION

THE division into 'Duans' was borrowed from Ossian :— 'Duan, a term of Ossian's for the different divisions of a digressive poem. See his *Cath-Loda*, vol. ii. of M'Pherson's Translation.' (R. B.) To Duan I., as it appeared in the 1786 Edition, seven stanzas were added in that of 1787, and one to Duan II. Fourteen stanzas of the poem as originally composed were withheld by Burns from publication, and were first printed (1852) in Chambers's Edition from the Stair ms., then in the possession of Mr. Dick of Irvine. Since then this ms. has been divided and sold piecemeal, the most of the suppressed stanzas, with two of the stanzas published in 1787, being now in the possession of Sir Robert Jardine of Castlemilk. The suppressed stanzas are strikingly inferior to those published in the original Edition ; but the true explanation seems to be—not any 'nodding' on the part of Burns after his genius was matured but—as stated in a letter to Mrs. Dunlop, 16th January 1787, that they formed part of *The Vision* as it 'originally stood,' when he composed it 'long ago.' In all likelihood the published stanzas were revised for the Kilmarnock volume, the others remaining untouched. Burns also states that the stanzas added in the '87 Edition formed part of the poem as it 'originally stood'; but the probability is that they were almost entirely recast. At least it is plain that in one case, that of Stanza xxii. (Duan I.), this was so :—

'Brydone's brave ward, I well could spy,' *etc.*,

which is merely an improved reading of Stanza xi. of the suppressed set :—

'Brydone's brave ward I saw him stand,' *etc.*

The following are the suppressed stanzas. After the 18th of Duan i. :—

THE
VISION

' With secret throes I marked that earth,
That cottage, witness of my birth ;
And near I saw, bold issuing forth
In youthful pride,
A Lindsay race of noble worth,
Famed far and wide.

' Where, hid behind a spreading wood,
An ancient Pict-built mansion stood,
I spied, among an angel brood,
A female fair ;
Sweet shone their high maternal blood
And fathers' air.¹

' An ancient tower² to memory brought
How Dettingen's bold hero fought ;
Still, far from sinking into nought,
It owns a lord
Who far in western climates fought,
With trusty sword.

' Among the rest I well could spy
One gallant, graceful, martial boy,
The *soldier* sparkled in his eye,
A diamond water ;
I blest that noble badge with joy
That owned me *frater*.³

After the 20th stanza of the text :—

' Near by arose a mansion fine,⁴
The seat of many a muse divine ;
Not rustic muses such as mine,
With holly crown'd,
But th' ancient, tuneful, laurell'd Nine,
From classic ground.

¹ Sundrum.—*R. B.*

² Stair.—*R. B.*

³ Captain James Montgomerie, Master of St. James' Lodge, Tarbolton, to which the author has the honour to belong.—*R. B.*

⁴ Auchinleck.—*R. B.*

THE
VISSON

I mourn'd the card that Fortune dealt,
To see where bonie Whitefoords dwelt ;¹
But other prospects made me melt :
That village near ;²
There Nature, Friendship, Love, I felt,
Fond-mingling dear !

'Hail ! Nature's pang, more strong than death !
Warm Friendship's glow, like kindling wrath !
Love, dearer than the parting breath
Of dying friend !
Not ev'n with life's wild devious path,
Your force shall end !

'The Pow'r that gave the soft alarms
In blooming Whiteford's rosy charms,
Still threatens the tiny, feather'd arms,
The barbed dart,
While lovely Wilhelminia warms
The coldest heart.'³

After the 21st stanza of the text :—

'Where Lugar leaves his moorland plaid,⁴
Where lately Want was idly laid,
I marked busy, bustling Trade,
In fervid flame,
Beneath a Patroness's aid,
Of noble name.

'Wild, countless hills I could survey,
And countless flocks as wild as they ;
But other scenes did charms display,
That better please,
Where polish'd manners dwell with Gray,
In rural ease.'⁵

'Where Cessnock pours with gurgling sound ;⁶
And Irwine, marking out the bound,

¹ Ballochmyle.

² Miss Wilhelminia Alexander.

³ Mr. Farquhar Gray.—*E. B.*

⁴ Mauchline.

⁵ Cessnock.—*E. B.*

⁶ Auchinakieth.—*E. B.*

Enamour'd of the scenes around,
 Slow runs his race,
 A name I doubly honor'd found,¹
 With knightly grace.

'Brydone's brave ward,² I saw him stand,
 Fame humbly offering her hand,
 And near, his kinsman's rustic band,³
 With one accord,
 Lamenting their late blessed land
 Must change its lord.

'The owner of a pleasant spot,
 Near sandy wilds, I last did note;⁴
 A heart too warm, a pulse too hot
 At times, o'erran;
 But large in ev'ry feature wrote,
 Appear'd the Man.'

DUAN I

STANZA I. LINE 1. 'The sun had clos'd the winter day':—
 Cf. *My Nannie O'* (p. 249), STANZA I. LINE 3. 'The wintry
 sun the day has closed.'

STANZA II. LINE 2. 'The lee-lang day had *tir'd* me,' 1786
 and 1787 (1).

STANZA IV. LINE 1. 'All in this *motty*, misty clime,' 1787
 (2). 2. 'I backward mus'd on *wastet* time,' 1787 (2).

STANZA X. LINE 1. 'A "hair-brained, sentimental trace":'
 —Cf. *Epistle to James Smith* (p. 67), STANZA XXVII. LINE
 1. 'Nae hair-brained, sentimental traces.'

STANZA XI. LINE 3. 'And such a leg! My *Bess I ween*,'
 1786; 'My *bonny Jean*,' 1787 (2):—'Bess' was substituted
 for 'Jean' in preparing the poem for the '86 Edition, on
 account of Armour's temporary renunciation; but although
 the acquaintanceship was not renewed until June '87, her
 name was restored in the '87 Edition, which was published
 in April.

STANZA XVI. This Stanza and the remaining ones of Duan I.
 were first published in the '87 Edition.

¹ Caprington.—R. B.² Colonel Fullarton.—R. B.³ Dr. Fullarton.—R. B.⁴ Oranfield.—R. B.

THE
VISION

STANZA XVII. LINE 2. 'To see a race heroic wheel' :— 'The Wallaces' (R. B.).

STANZA XVIII. LINE 1. 'His Country's Saviour, mark him well' :— 'William Wallace' (R. B.). 2. 'Bold Richardton's heroic swell' :— 'Adam Wallace of Richardton, cousin to the immortal preserver of Scottish independence' (R. B.). Richardton is now known as Riccarton. 3. 'The chief, on Sark who glorious fell' :— 'Wallace, laird of Craigie, who was second in command, under Douglas, Earl of Ormond, at the famous battle on the banks of Sark, fought *anno* 1448. That glorious victory was principally owing to the judicious conduct and intrepid valour of the gallant laird of Craigie, who died of his wounds after the action' (R. B.). The Wallaces of Craigie were descended from the Wallaces of Riccarton, John Wallace of Riccarton having married Margaret, daughter and heiress of Sir John Lindsay of Craigie. The heiress of Craigie in Burns's time was his friend Mrs. Dunlop, whose maiden name was Frances Anne Wallace. 5. 'And he whom ruthless fates expell,' 1787 (2).

STANZA XIX. LINE 1. 'There, where a scept'r'd Pictish shade,' etc. :— 'Coilus, King of the Picts, from whom the district of Kyle is said to take its name, lies buried, as tradition says, near the family seat of the Montgomeries of Coilsfield, where his burial place is still shown' (R. B.).

STANZA XX. LINE 1. 'Thro' many a wild, romantic grove' :— 'Barskimming, the seat of the Lord Justice-Clerk' (R. B.). It lies two miles south-west of Mauchline. The 'aged Judge' of LINE 5—to whom it belonged—was Sir Thomas Miller, son of William Miller of Glenlee, Kirkcudbrightshire; born 3rd November 1717; called to the Scottish Bar 21st February 1742; appointed Lord Justice-Clerk 14th June 1766, with the title of Lord Barskimming, afterwards changed to that of Lord Glenlee; Lord-President of the Court of Session 15th January 1788; created a baronet 3rd March of the same year; died 27th September 1789. The estate is still in the possession of the family.

STANZA XXI. LINE 2. 'The learned Sire and Son I saw' :— 'Catrine, the seat of the late Doctor and present Professor Stewart' (R. B.). It is situate about two miles south-east of Mauchline. The estate came into the possession of Dr.

Matthew Stewart—born 1717, died 23rd January 1785—Professor of Mathematics in the University of Edinburgh, through his marriage with Margaret, daughter of Archibald Stewart, Writer to the Signet; and here he spent the last years of his life. The 'son,' Professor Dugald Stewart—born 22nd November 1753, died 11th June 1828—the well-known metaphysician, usually spent a part of the summer at Catrine, and there Burns made his acquaintance. 5. 'That all its source and end to draw,' ms. at Castlemilk. 6. 'This, to adore,' ms. at Castlemilk.

THE
VISION

STANZA XXII. LINE 1. 'Brydone's brave ward I well could spy':—'Colonel Fullarton' (R. B.). Colonel William Fullarton was descended from an Ayrshire family, which for five centuries had possessed the barony of Fullarton, near Irvine; born 12th January 1754; educated at Edinburgh University; spent some time in foreign travel under the care of Patrick Brydone, author of a *Tour in Sicily*; in 1780 proposed an expedition to Mexico against the Spaniards; raised for this purpose the 98th Regiment, of which he was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel; was sent to the Cape of Good Hope—on account of the outbreak of the Dutch war—and thence to India, where in 1783 he was appointed to the command of the Southern army; published in 1787 *A View of the English Interests in India*, and in 1793 an *Account of the Agriculture of the County of Ayr*; raised the 23rd or Fullarton's Dragoons in 1794, and the 101st Regiment in 1802; appointed in April 1803 First Commissioner of Trinidad; died 13th February 1808. In 1791 Fullarton introduced himself to Burns, who afterwards corresponded with him, and sent him verses in ms. In his *Account of Agriculture* he notes that the method of dishorning cattle therein recommended was suggested 'by Mr. Robert Burns, whose general talents are no less conspicuous than the poetic powers which have done so much honour to the country in which he was born.'

DUAN II

STANZA III. LINE 6. 'Their labours ply,' 1787 (2) and 1794.

STANZA IV. LINE 2. 'Some fire the Sodger on to dare,' 1786.

THE STANZA VI. This Stanza was added in the '87 Edition.
VISION STANZA VII. LINE 1. 'Hence, Fullarton, the brave and young':—See Note to LINE 1 of STANZA XXII. of Duan 1. 2. 'Hence, Dempster's zeal-inspired tongue':—George Dempster of Dunnichen, M.P. See Note to *The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer* (STANZA XIII. LINE 1, p. 325).

STANZA XII. LINE 2. 'And this district as mine I claim':—The district of Kyle. 3. 'Where once the Campbells, chiefs of fame':—The Campbells of Loudoun, descended originally from Sir Duncan Campbell, of the house of Lochow, who in the reign of Robert 1. married Sussanah Crawford, heiress of Loudoun. In 1620 Sir James Campbell of Lawers married Margaret Campbell, Baroness of Loudoun, and on 12th May 1633 he was created Earl of Loudoun and Baron of Tarrinsean and Mauchline.

STANZA XVIII. LINE 2. '*Wild send thee Pleasure's devious way,*' 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794.

STANZA XX. LINE 1. 'Thou can'st not learn, nor *I can show,*' 1786, 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793. 2. '*To paint with Thomson's landscape-glow,*' 1786 and 1787 (1).

HALLOWEEN

A *Halloween* by John Mayne, author of the *Siller Gun*, appeared in Ruddiman's *Weekly Magazine* in November 1780. It is written in the six-line stave in *rime couée* of *The Piper of Kilbarchan* (see *ante*, pp. 336, 345), and suggested little to Burns except, perhaps, his theme. Burns prefaces his verses thus:—'The following poem will, by many readers, be well enough understood; but for the sake of those who are unacquainted with the manners and traditions of the country where the scene is cast, notes are added, to give some account of the principal charms and spells of that night, so big with prophecy to the peasantry in the west of Scotland. The passion of prying into futurity makes a striking part of the history of human nature in its rude state, in all ages and nations; and it may be some entertainment to a philosophic mind,

if any such should honour the author with a perusal, to see the remains of it among the more unenlightened in our own.' He also supplies the following note on the title, *Halloween* :—'Is thought to be a night when witches, devils, and other mischief-making beings are all abroad on their baneful, midnight errands; particularly those aerial people, the fairies, are said, on that night, to hold a grand anniversary.' *Cf.* Montgomerie, *Flying* (lines 274-9):—

'In the hinder end of harvest on Alhallow euen,
When our good neighbours doe ryd, gif I read right,' etc.

For an account of the stave, see *ante*, p. 328, the Prefatory Note to *The Holy Fair*. A portion of *Halloween*, beginning with the last seven lines of the seventeenth stanza, is included in the book purchased by the Kilmarnock Committee.

STANZA I. LINE 2. 'On Cassilis Downans dance':—'Certain little, romantic, rocky, green hills, in the neighbourhood of the ancient seat of the Earls of Cassilis' (R. B.). Cassilis, now a seat of the Marquis of Ailsa, who is also Earl of Cassilis, is the scene of the ballad of *Johnnie Faa*. 7. 'There, up the Cove, to stray and rove':—'A noted cavern near Colean House, called the Cove of Colean; which, as well as Cassilis Downans, is famed, in country story, for being a favourite haunt of Fairies' (R. B.). Colean House, now known as Colzean Castle, is the principal seat of the Marquis of Ailsa. Of the Coves, Sir William Brereton in his *Travels* relates that there was to be seen in them in 1634 'either a notable imposture, or most strange and much-to-be-admired footsteps and impressions' of 'men, children, dogs, coneyes, and divers other creatures,' which were 'here conceived to be spirits.'

STANZA II. LINE I. 'Among the *bony* winding banks,' 1794. 3. 'Where Bruce *aince* ruled the martial ranks,' 1787 (2):—'The famous family of that name, the ancestors of Robert, the great deliverer of his country, were Earls of Carrick' (R. B.). 8. 'An' *had* their Halloween,' 1787 (2).

STANZA III. LINES 3 and 4. In all editions a comma is

**HALLLOW-
EEN** placed before 'fa' and after 'kythe'; but the true reading seems to be *own*.

STANZA IV. LINE 2. 'Their "stocks" *mama* x' be sought *owes*' 1787 (2):—The first ceremony of Halloween is, pulling each a "stock," or plant of kail. They must go out, hand in hand, with eyes shut, and pull the first they meet with: its being big or little, straight or crooked, is prophetic of the size and shape of the grand object of all their spells—the husband or wife. If any "yird," or earth, stick to the root, that is "tocher," or fortune; and the taste of the "custoc," that is, the heart of the stem, is indicative of the natural temper and disposition. Lastly, the stems, or, to give them their ordinary appellation, the "runts," are placed somewhere above the head of the door; and the Christian names of people whom chance brings into the house are, according to the priority of placing the "runts," the names in question' (R. B.). 7. 'An' *pow't*, for want o' better shift,' 1787 (2).

STANZA VI. LINE 2. 'To pou their stalks o' corn':—They go to the barnyard, and pull each, at three several times, a stalk of oats. If the third stalk wants the "tap-pickle," that is, the grain at the top of the stalk, the party in question will come to the marriage-bed anything but a maid' (R. B.). 8. 'Whan *kiutlin* in the *fause-house*':—When the corn is in a doubtful state, by being too green or wet, the stack-builder, by means of old timber, etc., makes a large apartment in his stack, with an opening in the side which is furthest exposed to the wind: this he calls a "fause-house" (R. B.).

STANZA VII. LINE 1. 'The auld guid-wife's weel-hoosdet *nits*':—Burning the nits is a favourite charm. They name the lad and lass to each particular nit, as they lay them in the fire; and according as they burn quietly together, or start from beside one another, the course and issue of the courtship will be' (R. B.).

STANZA X. LINE 7. 'Rob, stowalins, pried her *sonny mon*,' 1787 (2).

STANZA XI. LINE 8. 'And in the blue-clue throws then':—Whoever would, with success, try this spell, must strictly observe these directions: Steal out, all alone, to the kiln, and, darkling, throw into the "pot" a clue of blue yarn; wind it in a new clue off the old one; and, towards the latter end, some-

thing will hold the thread: demand, "Wha hauds?" *i.e.* who HALLOW-holds? and answer will be returned from the kiln-pot, by EEN naming the Christian and surname of your future spouse' (R. B.).

STANZA XIII. LINE 3. 'I'll eat the apple at the glass':— 'Take a candle and go alone to a looking-glass; eat an apple before it, and some traditions say, you should comb your hair all the time; the face of your conjugal companion, *to be*, will be seen in the glass, as if peeping over your shoulder' (R. B.).

STANZA XIV. LINE 1. 'Ye little skelpie-limmer's-face!':— 'A technical term in female scolding' (R. B.).

STANZA XVI. LINE 5. 'He gat hemp-seed, I mind it weel':— 'Steal out, unperceived, and sow a handful of hemp-seed, harrowing it with anything you can conveniently draw after you. Repeat, now and then—"Hemp-seed I saw thee, hemp-seed I saw thee; and him (or her) that is to be my true love, come after me and pou thee." Look over your left shoulder, and you will see the appearance of the person invoked, in the attitude of pulling hemp. Some traditions say, "Come after me and shaw thee," that is, show thyself; in which case, it simply appears. Others omit the harrowing, and say, "Come after me and harrow thee"' (R. B.).

STANZA XVIII. LINE 9. 'As fast *that* night,' 1787 (2).

STANZA XXI. LINE 2. 'To winn three wechts o' naething':— 'This charm must likewise be performed unperceived and alone. You go to the barn, and open both doors, taking them off the hinges, if possible; for there is danger that the being about to appear, may shut the doors, and do you some mischief. Then take that instrument used in winnowing the corn, which in our country dialect we call a "wecht," and go through all the attitudes of letting down corn against the wind. Repeat it three times, and the third time, an apparition will pass through the barn, in at the windy door, and out at the other, having both the figure in question, and the appearance or retinue, marking the employment or station in life' (R. B.). A 'wecht' was a close sieve: *i.e.* the bottom was covered with leather.

STANZA XXII. LINE 7. 'Midden-hole':— 'A gutter at the bottom of the dunghill' (R. B. in *Glossary*). 8. 'And pray'd wi' zeal *an'* fervour,' 1787 (2).

**HALLOW-
KEN** STANZA XXIII. LINE 3. 'It chanc'd the stack he faddom't thrice':—'Take an opportunity of going (unnoticed) to a "bear-stack," and fathom it three times round. The last fathom of the last time, you will catch in your arms the appearance of your future conjugal yoke-fellow' (R. B.).

STANZA XXIV. LINE 7. 'Whare three lairds' lands met at a barn':—'You go out, one or more (for this is a social spell), to a south-running spring, or rivulet, where "three lairds' lands meet," and dip your left shirt-sleeve. Go to bed in sight of a fire, and hang your wet sleeve before it to dry. Lie awake; and, some time near midnight, an apparition, having the exact figure of the grand object in question, will come and turn the sleeve, as if to dry the other side of it' (R. B.).

STANZA XXVII. LINE 2. 'The luggies three are ranged':—Take three dishes, put clean water in one, foul water in another, and leave the third empty; blindfold a person, and lead him to the hearth where the dishes are ranged; he (or she) dips the left hand: if by chance in the clean water, the future (husband or) wife will come to the bar of matrimony a maid; if in the foul, a widow; if in the empty dish, it foretells, with equal certainty, no marriage at all. It is repeated three times, and every time the arrangement of the dishes is altered' (R. B.) 3. 'An' ev'ry time great care is taen' 1787 (2).

STANZA XXVIII. LINE 3. '*An' mony sunny tales and jokes,*' MS.; '*An'*,' 1794. 5. 'Till buttered sow'ns, wi' fragrant lunt':—Sowens, with butter instead of milk to them, is always the Halloween Supper' (R. B.). Sowens are made from the liquor got by steeping the seeds of oats in water. When it has soured, it is boiled to the thickness of porridge.

THE AULD FARMER'S NEW-YEAR MORNING SALUTATION TO HIS AULD MARE, MAGGIE

In the book purchased by the Kilmarnock Committee this excellent piece of observation and humour follows *The Address to the Deil*. Although not mentioned in the letter to Richmond, 17th February 1786, it was probably composed about the beginning of that year.

STANZA III. LINE 5. 'An' could hae *gane* out owre a stank,'
deleted reading in MS.

TO HIS

AULD

STANZA IV. LINE 5. '*It was but sma' but weel-win gear,*'
MS.

MARE

MAGGIE

STANZA VI. LINE 2. 'When ye bure hame my *bonny* bride,
1794. 5. 'Kyle-Stewart I could braggéd wide':—Kyle-Stewart is the northern division of the Ayrshire district of Kyle.

STANZA VII. LINE 1. 'Tho' now ye dow but hoyte and hobble':—Burns explains 'hoyte' as 'the motion between a trot and a gallop,' the old mare's stiffened joints preventing her from doing either properly.

STANZA X. LINE 1. 'The sma' *droot*-rump'l't, hunter cattle,' MS. and 1786. 2. '*Hight may be wart* thee for a brattle,' MS. 3. 'But sax Scotch *mile* thou try't their mettle,' MS. and 1786.

STANZA XI. LINE 1. 'Thou was a noble fittie-lan':—'Fittie lan' was the near horse of the hindmost pair in the plough, which was then drawn by four horses (see *The Inventory*, vol. ii.). 2. 'As e'er in tug or tow was drawn':—'Tug, raw hides, of which, in old times, plough-traces were frequently made' (R. B. in *Glossary*). They were also made of 'tow,' or rope.

STANZA XVI. LINE 5. '*But* here to *weary* age we're brought,' MS. 'Yet' deleted below '*but*.'

STANZA XVIII. LINE 1. 'We've worn to crazy years *wi' other*,' MS. In the MS. 4-6 read thus:—

'An' clap thy back
An' mind the days we've haen the gither,
An' ca the crack.'

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

The Cotter's Saturday Night is included in the list of poems mentioned by Burns in his letter to Richmond, 17th February 1786; it was therefore composed between the beginning of November 1785 and that date. Gilbert Burns relates that Robert first repeated it to him in the

COTTER's course of a walk one Sunday afternoon. He also states SATURDAY that the 'hint of the plan, and the title of the poem,' NIGHT were taken from Fergusson's *Farmer's Ingle*.

This is true, but the piece as a whole is formed on English models. It is the most artificial and the most imitative of Burns's works. Not only is the influence of Gray's *Elegy* conspicuous, but also there are echoes of Pope, Thomson, Goldsmith, and even Milton; while the stanza, which was taken, not from Spenser, whom Burns had not then read, but from Beattie and Shenstone, is so purely English as to lie outside the range of Burns's experience and accomplishment. 'These English songs,' he wrote long afterwards (1794) to Thomson, 'gravel me to death. I have not that command of the language that I have of my native tongue. In fact, I think my ideas are more barren in English than in Scottish.' This is so far true as to make one wish that here, as elsewhere, he had chosen a Scots exemplar: that he had taken (say) not merely the scheme but also the stave—*a, b, a, b, c, d, c, d*—of *The Farmer's Ingle*, and sought after effects which he could accomplish in a medium of which he was absolute master. As it is, *The Cotter's Saturday Night* is supposed to paint an essentially Scottish phase of life; but the Scottish element in the diction—to say nothing of the Scottish cast of the effect—is comparatively slight throughout, and in many stanzas is altogether wanting. In the '94 Edition the vernacular was a little coloured by a more general substitution of '*an*' for '*and*,' '*wi*' for '*with*,' and so on. But it may be that Tytler, rather than Burns, was responsible for this; and the earlier orthography, being in better keeping with the general English cast, has been retained.

The ms. sent to Mr. Robert Aiken—ms. (A)—[for a copy of this ms. we are indebted to the kindness of his descendant, Mr. J. Chetwood Aiken], differs much more from the printed version than either the ms. in the British Museum—ms. (B)—or the ms. in the book

purchased by the Kilmarnock Committee—*MS. (C)*—COTTER'S which last has the heading, *The Cotter's Saturday 'T SATURDAY E'en*. The printer's copy—*MS. (D)*—of which a facsimile NIGHT was printed in 1840, is in the possession of the Irvine Club. *MS. (A)* wants the motto from Gray.

STANZA I. LINE 1. 'My lov'd, my honor'd, much respected friend':—Robert Aiken, eldest son of John Aiken, shipbuilder, Ayr, by Sarah Dalrymple, second daughter of James Dalrymple, sheriff-clerk of Ayrshire; born 23rd August 1739; became solicitor and Surveyor of Taxes in Ayr; was probably acquainted with the Burns household in the early years of Robert's life; introduced him to Gavin Hamilton with a view to his taking Mossiel; displayed great skill and eloquence in his successful defence of Gavin Hamilton before the Presbytery of Ayr against the Kirk-Session of Mauchline; especially excelled as an elocutionist—so much so that Burns said that he 'read' him 'into fame'; and is mentioned by Burns in his letter to Richmond, 17th February 1786, as 'my chief patron,' who 'is pleased to express great approbation of my works.' He is said by Burns in a supposed letter to John Ballantine, printed by Cunningham, but without date, to have been art and part in the destruction of his declaration of marriage to Jean Armour; but Miss Grace Aiken, who had access to letters of Burns to her father, now lost, testifies that there 'never was any interruption in their friendship or correspondence' (P. F. Aiken, *Memorials of Burns*, p. 102). He subscribed for 105 copies of the Kilmarnock Edition; and died at Ayr 24th March 1807. He is the 'glib-tongued Aiken' of *Holy Willie's Prayer*; the 'Orator Bob' of *The Kirk's Alarm*; and the 'Aiken dear' of *The Farewell*.

STANZA II. LINE 4. 'The black'ning flocks o' craws to their repose,' *MSS. (A, B and C)*.

STANZA III. LINE 3. 'Th' expectant wee-things, tottlin, stacher thro',' *MSS. (B and C)*; 'thro' also in *MSS. (A and D)*, although printed 'through' in 1786. 8. 'Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,' 1793 and 1794.

STANZA V. LINE 3. 'The tender hours, swift-winged, unnoticed fleet,' *MSS. (A and B)*. 8. 'Maks auld claes leuk amaist as weel's the new,' *MS. (C)*.

COTTER'S STANZA VI. LINE 5. 'And O, be sure to *mind* the Lord
SATURDAY alway,' deleted reading in MS. (B). 6. 'And *tent* your duty duly,
NIGHT morn and night,' deleted reading in MS. (B). 9. 'They never
sought in vain *who* sought the Lord aright,' MSS. (A, B and C).

STANZA VII. LINE 5. 'The wily mother *spys* the conscious
flame,' MS. (A).

STANZA VIII. LINE 5. 'The youngster's *witless* heart o'er-
flows wi' joy,' MSS. (A and C). 8. 'What makes the youth
sae *awkward* an' sae grave,' MSS. (A and B).

STANZA IX. LINE 1. 'O happy love! where *suchen* love is
found,' MSS. (A, B, and C). 3. '*I, who have trac'd long*
this weary round,' MS. (A); 'I've *trac'd long*,' MS. (B); 'I've
pac'd long,' MS. (C). 4. '*From deep-felt sage experience can*
declare,' MS. (A). 9. 'Beneath the milk-white thorn that
scents the *balmy* gale,' MS. (B); '*ev'ning*' deleted; '*evening*'
in MSS. (C and D); and in MS. (D) '*balmy*' deleted.

STANZA X. LINE 5. 'Curse on his *coward* arts! dissembling
smooth,' deleted reading in MS. (D); '*airts*,' 1787 (2).

STANZA XI. LINE 1. 'But now the *cheerful* supper crowns
the board,' MS. (A). 8. '*Meanwhile* the wife garrulous will
tell,' MS. (A).

STANZA XII. LINE 1. 'The *social* supper done, wi' serious
face,' MS. (A). 5. 'The big ha' bible':—So called from its
original use in the noble's hall, wherein the whole household
assembled for religious services.

STANZA XIII. LINE 6. 'The *chiefest* far of Scotia's holy lays,'
MS. (B).

STANZA XV. LINE 6. 'What precepts sage they wrote to
many a land,' MS. (A).

STANZA XVI. LINE 3. 'Hope "springs exulting on
triumphant wing"' :—'Pope's *Windsor Forest*' (R. B.). The
passage is :—

'See! from the brake the whirring pheasant springs,
And mounts exulting on triumphant wings.'

STANZA XVIII. LINE 1. 'Then homeward *each* takes off *his*
several way,' MSS. (A and B); '*each* take off their,' MS. (C).

STANZA XIX. LINE 4. '"An honest man's the *noble* work of
God,'" MSS., 1786, 1787 (1), and 1787 (2):—Perhaps an im-
provement on the line of Pope's *Essay on Man*, iv. 247, in the
printed text.

STANZA XXI. LINE 2. 'That streamed in great unhappy *COTTER'S*
Wallace heart,' MSS. (B and C); '*through great unhappy SATURDAY*
Wallace heart,' MS. (A), which reading, with 'thro' for NIGHT
 'through,' was adopted in MS. (D), 1786, 1787 (1), and 1787 (2):
 —Mrs. Dunlop objected to the application of this phrase to
 her ancestral relative Sir William Wallace; and in a letter,
 dated Edinburgh, 15th January 1787, Burns replies:—'I dis-
 trusted my own judgment on your finding fault with it, and
 applied for the opinion of some of the *litterati* here, who honour
 me with their critical strictures, and they all allow it to be
 proper.' But although he retained the phrase in the '87
 Edition, he changed the line in that of '93.

TO A MOUSE

GILBERT BURNS testifies that the verses to the 'Mouse'
 were suggested by the incident in the heading of the
 poem, and composed 'while the author was holding the
 plough.' A MS. is included in Mr. Alfred Morrison's
 collection.

STANZA I. LINE 5. 'I wad be laith *tae* rin an' chase thee,'
 MS.

STANZA III. LINE 2. 'What then? *puir* beastie, thou
 maun live,' MS. 6. 'And never miss't,' 1794.

STANZA IV. LINE 3. 'An' naething, now, *tae* big a new
 ane,' MS. 5. 'An' *could* December's winds ensuin,' MS.

STANZA V. LINE 1. 'Thou saw the fields laid *bleak* an'
 waste,' MS. 4. 'Then thought *tae* dwell,' MS.

STANZA VI. LINE 5. *Tae* thole the winter's sleety dribble,'
 MS. 6. 'But *hame* or hald,' MS.

STANZA VII. LINE 2. 'In proving foresight *whyles* in
 vain,' MS. 4. 'Aft gang agley,' MS.

STANZA VIII. LINE 1. 'But thou art blest compar'd wi'
 me,' MS.

EPISTLE TO DAVIE

THE 'Davie' of this *Epistle* was David Sillar, third son
 of Patrick Sillar, farmer at Spittleside, near Tarbolton,

EPISTLE TO DAVIE born in 1760. He made the acquaintance of Burns early in 1781 at Lochlie; in May of that year was admitted a member of the Bachelors' Club; was for some time interim teacher in the parish school, Tarbolton, and afterwards started an 'adventure' school at Commonsides; opened a grocer's shop in Irvine towards the close of 1783; published in 1789 a volume of *Poems* in imitation of Burns, who helped him to get subscribers; after an attempt to get literary work in Edinburgh, returned to Irvine, where he took up teaching again, and ultimately became town councillor and magistrate; died 2nd May 1830.

Burns, in his *Second Epistle to Davie* (see vol. ii.), with which Sillar prefaced his own *Poems*, thus chided him for his neglect of the Muse:—

‘Sic hauns as yours sud ne’er be faikit,
Be hained wha like.’

But this estimate was not justified: Sillar's published verses are mere commonplace. A letter giving his recollections of Burns was published in Josiah Walker's Edition (1811), and has often been reprinted. Sillar, whose skill as a fiddler may partly explain Burns's admiration, wrote the air to which *A Rosebud by my Early Walk* was set in Johnson's *Museum*.

Burns refers to this *Epistle* as being in the metre of Montgomerie's *The Cherry and the Slae*. The first known set of that famous poem—‘composed into Scottis Meeter, be Alexander Montgomerie’—was printed in 1597; a second, greatly enlarged, appeared in 1615, and this was reprinted in *The Ever Green*; yet another was included in Watson's First Part. Montgomerie was born about 1540, and died after 1605. There is no reason to doubt that he invented the peculiar quatorzain in which he couched his longest poem and his charming *Banks of Helicon*; for, like his predecessor Dunbar, and his contemporary, Alexander Scott, he was most curious in rhythm and

rhyme, and a finished artist in metrical forms. King James, who quotes a stanza from *The Cherry and the Slae* in his *Schorle Treatise*, 1585, refers to it in connexion with 'all kyndis of cuttit and broken verse,' whereof 'new formes are daylie inuentit according to the Poëtes pleasour': which seems to make for the righteousness of Montgomerie's claim. Sir Richard Maitland's *Ane Ballat of the Creatioun of the World* in *The Bannatyne MS.* is written to the tune of *The Banks of Helicon*. As this tune is not mentioned in *The Complaint of Scotland* (1548), the inference is that the poem to which it was originally set was of later date. Thus, the set of *The Banks of Helicon* preserved in the Maitland mss. could scarce have existed before Montgomerie's time, even had it not shown such unmistakable marks of his art. Probably *The Banks of Helicon* preceded *The Cherry and the Slae*, and the popularity of the tune may have given the stanza its vogue, which, allowing for differences, is not incomparable to that commanded by the stave of *Dolores* five-and-twenty years ago. Other examples than the *Ballat* of Sir Richard Maitland are *Ane Ballat of ye Captane of the Castell*, written in 1571, probably by Sir William Kirkcaldy of Grange (d. 1573); *The Passage of a Pilgrim*, by John Burel or Burrel (fl. 1590), probably Master of the Mint to James vi. (printed in Watson's Second Part); and *The Dumb Wyff*, preserved in the Maitland mss. in Magdalen College, Cambridge, and also in Bishop More's mss. in the University Library, Cambridge, and published by David Laing in *Select Remains of Ancient Popular Poetry*. The tune, which Burns describes, in a letter to Thomson, as being in his possession, may very well have been that one printed by Laing in his Edition of Montgomerie, and reprinted as an Appendix to the Scottish Text Society's Edition (1886-87). The 'quatorzeim' was revived by Ramsay in *The Vision* and elsewhere: so that to Burns the use of it came naturally enough.

It has not, so far as we know, been used outside the

EPISTLE
TO DAVIE

EPISTLE country of its birth ; but Mr. Swinburne has fitted its
TO DAVIE essential feature to a stave of his own devising :—

‘Men, born of the land that for ages
 Has been honoured where freedom was dear,
 Till your labour wax fat on its wages
 You shall never be peers of a peer.
 Where might is, the right is :
 Long purses make strong swords.
 Let weakness learn meekness.
 God save the House of Lords.’

The first member of Montgomerie’s quatorzain was itself
 a stave, and was common in mediæval verse. Here
 is an example from Wright’s *Specimens of Lyric Poetry
 Composed in England in the Reign of Edward I.* (1842) :—

‘Nou akruketh rose ant lylie flour,
 That whillen ber that suete savour,
 In somer, that suete tyde ;
 Ne is no quene so stark ne stour,
 Ne no levedy so bryht in boure,
 That ded ne shal by-glyde.
 Whose wol fleysh lust for-gon,
 Ant hevne blis abyde,
 On Jhesu be is thoht anon,
 That therled was ys syde.’

Elsewhere in the same collection the stave is given with
 a difference : the two members changing places, so that
 it begins with the interlacing rhymes, and ends with the
 strophe in *rime couée*. As for the characteristic and
 peculiar feature which was added by Montgomerie, it
 was suggested (in the Scottish Text Society’s edition of
 that poet’s work : Part III. p. xliv.) that its origin is to be
 sought in the mediæval Latin hymnal. Here is an ex-
 ample, from a poem of the Thirteenth Century :—

‘Nec ignoro quo laboro,
 Sed ut de me judico
 Vel ægrotus magis notus
 Michi sum quam medico.’

'It was, I think, in the summer of 1784,' writes Gilbert Burns, 'when in the intervals of harder labour Robert and I were weeding in the garden, that he repeated to me the principal part of this *Epistle*.' The ms.—ms. (A)—in the possession of the representatives of the late ex-Provost Brown, Paisley, includes the two last stanzas of this poem. A ms.—ms. (B)—at one time in the possession of Miss Grace Aiken, Ayr, and afterwards of Robert Gibson, Glasgow, who gave the use of it to Scott Douglas, is headed *An Epistle to Davy, a Brother-Poet, Lover, Ploughman and Fiddler*. Both this ms. and another included in the volume purchased by the Kilmarnock Committee—ms. (C)—are dated January 1785. The reference to Jean Armour caused a doubt as to completion thus early; but its occurrence in both mss. is conclusive. Scott Douglas, further, broached the theory that the *Epistle*, as originally written and sent to Sillar, did not contain the references to Jean; but why should Burns, contrary to his habit, have retained them after the misunderstanding, unless they formed an essential part of the original *Epistle*? The truth is, there are no grounds whatever for placing the beginning of Burns's acquaintance with Jean at so late a date as it has been the custom to premise. On the contrary, all the probabilities favour the theory of an earlier year. Burns removed to Mossgiel, near Mauchline, in March 1784. Is it consistent with his character to have overlooked the charms of the 'jewel o' them a' ' (see *The Belles of Mauchline*, Vol. ii.) for more than a year? If he met her first at a ball in Mauchline in April, must it not rather have been in 1784 than in 1785?

STANZA I. LINE 1. 'While winds frae off Ben-Lomond blaw,' 1786, 1787 (1), and 1793:—Ben Lomond is visible—in the distant northern horizon—from various points in Ayrshire.

STANZA II. LINE 4. 'How best o' chields are *whiles* in want,' 1794. 5. 'While *fools* on countless thousands rant,' ms. (B). 11. 'Mair spier na, nor fear na':—'Ramsay' (R. B.).

EPISTLE TO DAVIE The line most nearly resembling this in Ramsay is 'Nocht feirful, but cheirful,' in *The Vision*. It closely resembles a line in *Ans Ballat of the Creationn of the World*:—'Nocht feiring bott speiring,' and more faintly one in *The Cherry and the Slae*:—'Then fear not, nor hear not,' which also occurs in *The Banks of Helicon*.

STANZA III. LINE 1. 'To *lye* in kilns and barns at e'en,' MS. (C) and 1786. 11. '*An*' mind still, you'll find still,' MS. (C) and 1787 (2). 14. 'Nae further *we can fa*,' MS. (C), 1786, 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793.

STANZA IV. LINE 13. 'Syne rhyme till 't, *well* time till 't,' 1786, 1787 (1), and 1793.

STANZA VI. LINE 14. '*It's a*' an idle tale,' MS. (B) and 1787 (2).

STANZA VII. LINE 5. '*Yet here I sit has* met wi' some,' MS. (B) and deleted reading in MS. (C); '*has*,' MS. (C). 9. 'They *let* us see the naked truth,' MS. (A).

STANZA IX. LINE 1. 'O' all *you* pow'rs who rule above,' 1787 (2). 7-10. These lines in MS. (B) and as deleted in MS. (C) read thus:—

*'In a' my share of care an' grief
Which fate has largely given,
My hope, my comfort an' relief
Are thoughts o' her an' heaven.'*

STANZA X. LINE 10. 'A *tye* more tender still,' MS. (C) and 1786.

STANZA XI. LINE 3. '*Without a claw or rug*,' MS. (A). 6. '*Were harkin in my lug*,' MS. (A).

THE LAMENT

'THE unfortunate issue,' not of a 'friend's,' but of his own 'amour'—(when Jean Armour, overborne by paternal authority, agreed to discard him)—was, Burns declares, the 'unfortunate story alluded to' in the *Lament*: a 'shocking affair' he calls it, which had nearly given him 'one or two of the principal qualifications among those who have lost the chart and mistaken the reckoning of rationality.' According to Gilbert, the poem was com-

posed 'after the first distraction of his feelings had a little subsided.'

THE
LAMENT

Scott Douglas refers to the 'amazing double somersault of rhyme,' which is done in every stanza of this piece. But for a couple of centuries at least the octave on three rhymes—*a, b, a, b, b, c, b, c*—was the most popular of the old Scots staves. It is described and exemplified in the *Schorte Treatise*:—'For any heich and graue subiectis,' says the royal Prentise, 'specially drawin out of learnit authouris, vse this kynde of verse following, callit *Ballat Royal*, as:—

That nicht he ceist, and went to bed, bot greind
Zit fast for day, and thoct the night to lang:
At last Diana down her head reeleind,
Into the sea. Then Luotter vpsprang,
Auroras post, whome sho did send amang
The leittle cludda, for to foretell ane hour
Before sho stay her tears, quhilk Ouide sang
Fell for her loue, quhilk turnit in a flour.'

Here the structure of the stave and the arrangement and number of the rhymes are precisely those of an octave in an octosyllabic *ballade*: wherein, however, the rhymes of the first eight verses are those of all the twenty-eight. The French influence was strong in Scotland. Dunbar, to go no further back, is drenched in it, and handles (*passim*) the three-rhymed octave with special ease (see *Poetical Works*, S. T. S.'s Edition [1868-89], Appendix iii.): as do many of the men, innominate or not, whose work is preserved in *The Bannatyne MS.* and the Maitland *ms.* In lines, then, of ten, eight, or even six feet, the three-rhymed octave is a classic in Scots versification. It is used by Henryson (1430-1506?), who got it from Chaucer, and by the Mersar of Dunbar's *Lament*—'He hes reft Merseir his endite'—in the sole example of his work which has survived; by Gavin Douglas (1475?-1522) in *King Hart* and the *Prologue* to the 'Sext Buik' of his *Eneados* (1513); by Dunbar as we have said, and in the bulk of his *Flyting* with Walter Kennedy (1460-1506?);

THE LAMENT by Kennedy himself; by Sir David Lindsay in his *Descriptioun of Pedder Coffeis* and his *Complaynt of Bageche*; by John Bellenden (*A.* 1508-1587) in the *Proheme* affixed to his *Boece* (1536); by Sir Richard Maitland, Robert Semple, Scott, Montgomerie, Hume of Polwarth (whose *Flyting* with Montgomerie is included in Watson's Second Part), and a score besides: one of the last to handle it in the old Scots manner being that Francis Sempill of Beltrees (*d.* 1679), to whom has been ascribed a very early set of *Auld Lang Syne*, and whose *Banishment of Povertie*, though it is printed in quatrains, is certainly written in ballade octaves. What is more to our purpose is the fact that Allan Ramsay printed some twenty capital examples in *The Ever Green*:—Kennedy's *Mouth Thanlless*, Scott's *Ballat to the Derisioune and Scorne of Wantoun Wemen*, Lindsay's *Pedder Coffeis* aforesaid, the old songs of *Harlaw* and the *Reid-Squar*, the *Panygyrick on Sr. Penny*, the pleasant lyric beginning 'Quhen Flora had owrfrett the Firth,' Semple's *Ballat Maid upon Margaret Fleming*, Dunbar's *Flyting*, the ballad of *Auld Kyndness*, and the like. So that it came to Burns as a national formula, and as such it was instantly acceptable to him.

STANZA I. LINE 3. 'Thou seest a wretch *that* inly pines,' 1793 and 1794.

STANZA VIII. LINE 3. 'My toil-beat nerves and tear-~~won~~ eye,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793.

DESPONDENCY

COMPOSED, no doubt, a little after the *Lament*.

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN

IN a letter to Mrs. Dunlop, 10th August 1788, Burns tells of an old grand-uncle who had gone blind:—'His

most voluptuous enjoyment was to sit down and cry, while my mother would sing the simple old song of *The Life and Age of Man*. The old song began thus :—

MAN WAS
MADE TO
MOURN

'Twas in the sixteenth hunder year
Of God and fifty-three
Frae Christ was born, that bought us dear,
As writings testifie;
On January the sixteenth day,
As I did lie alone,
With many a sob and sigh did say,
Ah ! man was made to moan !'

A copy of this ballad—'to the tune *Isle of Kell*'—was published as a chap by J. & M. Robertson, Saltmarket, Glasgow, 1806, under the title :—*The Age and Life of Man, or a Short Description of the (sic) Nature, Rise and Fall, according to the Twelve Months of the Year*. According to Gilbert Burns, the later dirge was intended to set forth 'a sentiment of the author': that there is 'no more mortifying picture of human nature than a man seeking work.' But the miseries it paints are those of excessive and ill-requited toil.

In the *First Common Place Book* it—ms. (A)—entered under the date August 1785, is headed : 'A Song (Tune—*Peggy Bawn*).' A ms.—ms. (B)—is included in the book purchased by the Kilmarnock Committee.

STANZA I. LINE 3. 'One ev'ning as I *wandered* forth,' ms. (A); '*wander'd*' ms. (B) and 1787 (2).

STANZA III. LINE 4. '*The Lordly Cassilis* pride,' mss. (A and B).

STANZA V. LINE 5. 'But see him on the edge of *days*,' ms. (A). 6. 'With cares and *labors* worn,' mss. (A and B).

STANZA VI. LINE 2. 'In *Fortune's* lap carest,' mss. (A and B). 6. '*To wants and sorrows* born,' ms. (A); '*are* wretched and forlorn,' 1794.

STANZA VII. Lines 1-2 in ms. (A) read thus :—

'*Many the ills that Nature's hand
Has woven with our frame.*'

MAN WAS STANZA VIII. LINE 8. 'And helpless *children* mourn,'
MADE TO MS. (A).

MOURN STANZA IX. LINES 1-2. In MSS. (A and B) these lines read thus :—

'If I am *doom'd* yon lordling's slave
By Nature's *hand* design'd.'

STANZA X. LINES 5-6. In MS. (A) these lines read thus :—

'The poor oppressed honest *heart*
Had *surely* ne'er been born.'

STANZA XI. LINE 6. 'From *pomps* and *pleasures* torn,' MS. (A); 'pomp and *pleasures*,' MS. (B). 7. 'But oh! a blest relief *for* those,' MS. (A), MS. (B), 1786 and 1787 (1).

WINTER

BURNS writes in the *First Common Place Book* under date April 1784 :—'There is scarcely any earthly object gives me more—I don't know if I should call it pleasure, but something which exalts me, something which enraptures me—than to walk in the sheltered side of a wood or high plantation, in a cloudy winter day, and hear a stormy wind howling among the trees and raving o'er the plain. It is my best season for devotion; my mind is rapt up in a kind of enthusiasm to Him who in the pompous language of Scripture, "Walks on the wings of the wind." In one of these seasons, just after a tract of misfortunes, I composed the following song'—*Winter*, to wit. Gilbert affirms it to be a 'juvenile production'; and the poet himself, in his Autobiographic Letter to Dr. Moore, refers to it as 'the eldest of my printed pieces,' and includes it among others composed in the interval between his return from Kirkoswald and his residence in Irvine. It is therefore impossible to assign it to a period so late as that conjectured by Chambers and Scott Douglas; and the 'tract of misfortunes' cannot describe, as the latter held, the disasters at Irvine, but was probably one of family losses. In the MS. in the *First Common Place Book*—MS.

(A)—the tune assigned to it is *M'Pherson's Farewell*; in the book purchased by the Kilmarnock Committee—*MS.* (B)—it is called simply *M'Pherson*. An improved reading, in the fifth line in *MS.* (B)—perhaps forgotten when the *MS.* was copied for the printer—is adopted in the text.

STANZA I. LINE 5. '*And* tumbling brown the burn comes down,' *MS.* (A). In *MS.* (B) '*while*' is deleted and '*wild*' inserted, although all the printed Editions have '*while*.' 7. '*And* bird and beast in covert rest,' *MS.* (A), and all Editions. 8. '*And* pass the *weary* day,' *MS.* (A).

STANZA II. LINE 1. '*The sweeping blast, the sky o'ercast*': —'*Dr. Young*' (R. B.).

STANZA III. LINE 8. '*O help* me to resign,' *MS.* (B).

A PRAYER IN PROSPECT OF DEATH

First Common Place Book, under date August 1784:—'*A Prayer when fainting fits, and other alarming symptoms of a pleurisy or some other dangerous disorder, which indeed still threaten me, first put nature on the alarm.*' A *MS.* in the Burns Monument, Edinburgh, has the heading: '*A Prayer when dangerously threatened with pleuritic attacks.*' The piece has been assigned to 1784, but the entry in the *Common Place Book* proves it earlier than the August of that year. It was probably written during Burns's residence in Irvine, when, as would appear from a letter to his father, 27th December 1781, he had the prospect of '*perhaps very soon*' bidding '*adieu* to all the pains, and uneasiness, and disquietudes of this weary life.' None of the *MSs.* differs from the copy as printed.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY

ENCLOSED, under the title of *The Gowan*, in a letter of 20th April 1786, to John Kennedy, clerk to the *Ex.* of Dumfries, at Dumfries House, near Mauchline:—'*I*

TO A MOUNTAIN DABBY have here likewise enclosed a small piece, the very latest of my productions. I am a good deal pleased with some sentiments myself, as they are just the native querulous feelings of a heart which, as the elegantly melting Gray says, "melancholy has marked for her own." The last five stanzas conveying the moral are in undiluted English.

STANZA II. LINE 4. 'Wi's spreckl'd breast,' 1786.

STANZA IX. LINE 3. 'Stern Ruin's plough-share drives elate':—Possibly, but not necessarily, a reminiscence of Young:—

'Stars rush, and final Ruin fiercely drives
Her plough-share o'er creation.'

TO RUIN

From the lines:—

'For one has out my dearest tie,
And quivers in my heart':—

it would appear that this piece dates from the close of Burns's residence at Irvine in 1782, when, to crown his misfortunes, he was, as he relates in his Autobiographical Letter, jilted 'with peculiar circumstances of mortification,' by one 'who had pledged her soul to marry him.' True, he was greatly distracted by Armour's conduct in repudiating him; but there is no evidence that he was revisited by the hypochondriacal longing for death to which expression is given in his second stanza.

For the stave see *ante* (p. 366), Prefatory Note to the *Epistle to Davie*.

EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND

THE 'young friend' of this *Epistle* was Andrew Hunter Aiken, son of Robert Aiken of Ayr. After a successful commercial career in Liverpool, he became English consul at Riga, where he died in 1831. His son, Peter Freeland

Aiken—born 1790, died 3rd March 1877—published in 1876 *Memoirs of Robert Burns and some of his Contemporaries*. EPISTLE
TO A
YOUNG
FRIEND

William Niven of Kirkoswald—afterwards of Maybole, and finally of Kilbride—was accustomed to complain—not, however, to Burns, in so far as is known, nor till after his death—that this *Epistle* was originally addressed to him. His claim was supported by the Rev. Hamilton Paul (*Poems and Songs of Burns*, 1819); but, as Niven had no copy to show, it would seem that, if a rhyming *Epistle* were sent him, he set little store by the honour.

The stave is that of Ramsay's *Bessy Bell and Mary Gray and Come, Shepherds, a' Your Whistles Join*.

The original *Epistle* sent to Aiken—dated 15th May 1786—is now in the Kilmarnock Monument Museum. In this copy Stanzas III. and IV. are transposed, and after Stanza VI. occurs the following octave, omitted in the printed version :—

‘If ye hae made a step aside,
Some hap-mistake o’ertaen you,
Yet, still keep up a decent pride,
An’ ne’er owre far demean you.
Time comes wif kind, oblivious shade
An’ daily darker sets it;
An’ if na-mae mistakes are made
The world soon forgets it.’

STANZA II. LINE 6. ‘Ev’n when your *view’s* attained,’ MS.
7. ‘An’ a’ your *schemes* may come to nought,’ MS.

STANZA III. LINE 5. ‘But *generally mankind are weak*,’ MS.

STANZA IV. LINE 2. ‘Their fate we *would* na censure,’ 1794.

STANZA VI. LINE 5 :—The use of ‘rove’ as a substantive is rare. Most likely Burns borrowed it from Young :—‘Thy nocturnal rove.’

STANZA XI. LINE 1. ‘*Farewell*, dear, amiable youth,’ MS.
8. ‘Than *e’er* did th’ Adviser,’ 1787 (2).

ON A SCOTCH BARD

GONE TO THE WEST INDIES

PROBABLY among the latest written for the Kilmarnock Edition. While it was in progress, Burns was maturing his plans for emigration, and on 17th July 1786 he wrote to David Brice, Glasgow:—‘I am now fixed to go for the West Indies in October.’ A ms. was in the possession of the editor of the Aldine *Burns*, published by Pickering in 1839.

STANZA I. LINE 5. ‘Our *Billie Bob* has taen a jink,’ MS.

STANZA II. LINE 5. ‘*He’s canter’t* to anither shore,’ MS.

STANZA III. LINE 1. ‘The bonie lasses weel may *miss* him,’ 1793. 2. ‘An’ *pray kind fortune to redress* him,’ MS.

STANZA V. LINE 1. ‘Auld, cantie Kyle may weepers wear’:—Weepers are strips of muslin worn on the cuffs of mourners. Kyle is a district in Ayrshire: not Kilmarnock, as stated by some editors. 3. ‘Twill *gar* her poor, auld heart, I fear,’ MS.

STANZA VII. LINE 2. ‘An’ scarce a bellyfu’ o’ drummock,’ MS.

STANZA X. LINE 1. ‘*Then fare-you well my rhymin billie*,’ MS.

A DEDICATION

TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

GAVIN HAMILTON—to whom Burns here dedicates the First Edition of his poems, because ‘I thought them something like yoursell,’ was descended from an old Ayrshire family, the Hamiltons of Kype. The fifth son of John Hamilton of Kype—who was settled as a Writer in Mauchline—by his first wife, Jacobina King, he was born in 1751, probably in November, as he was baptized on the 20th of that month; succeeded his father as solicitor in Mauchline, occupying a castellated mansion, now partly in ruins, hard by the churchyard; and sublet the farm of Moasgiel to Burns and his brother Gilbert. Like the poet, he sympathised

with liberalism in religion, and they became warm TO GAVIN friends. He was prosecuted in the autumn of 1784 by the HAMILTON Kirk-Session of Mauchline for neglect of public ordinances and other irregularities; and wrote a letter to the Session, affirming that its proceedings were dictated by 'private pique and ill-nature.' The accusation is corroborated by Cromek, who states that the Rev. William Auld of Mauchline had quarrelled with Hamilton's father (in all probability the true cause of both the quarrel with the father and the Sessional prosecution of the son was the hereditary Episcopacy of the Hamiltons). Ultimately, through the intervention of the Presbytery of Ayr, Gavin Hamilton compelled the Session, on 17th July 1785, to grant him a certificate that he was 'free from public scandal or ground of Church censure known' to them: a triumph celebrated in *Holy Willie's Prayer*. He was again prosecuted by the Session for causing his servants to dig new potatoes in his garden on the 'last Lord's day' of July 1787. He died 5th February 1805. Hamilton's character is very fully portrayed in the *Dedication*, and incisively in his *Epitaph* (p. 188). Several letters from Burns to him are published, including a *Rhyming Epistle* and *Stanzas on Naething*; and there are references to him in *Holy Willie's Prayer*, the *Epistle to John M'Math*, and *The Farewell*.

For the rhythmus, see *ante* (p. 319), Prefatory Note to *The Two Dogs*.

LINE 26. 'He's just—nae better than he *show'd* be,' 178 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793. 51. 'And och! that's nae regeneration':—Omitted in 1787 (1), 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794. 54. 'Vain is his life *whose* stay and trust is,' 1794. 69. 'O ye wha leave the springs of Calvin,' 1794.

TO A LOUSE

A MS. is in the Bodleian Library.

STANZA I. LINE I. 'Ha! whare ye gaun, ye *blastit* ferlie,'

TO A MS. 2. 'Your impudence protects you *sairlie*,' 1787 (1), 1787
LOUSE (2), and 1793. 5. 'Tho' faith! I fear ye *feed* but sparsely,' MS.

STANZA II. LINE 3. 'How daur ye set a fit upon her,' MS.;
'*dare*,' 1794. 5. '*Swiik!* somewhere else, and seek your
dinner,' MS.

STANZA III. LINE 1. '*Gae!* in some beggar's haufset
squattle,' MS. 2 and 3:—These lines are transposed in the
MS. 4. 'Whare horn nor bane ne'er *dare* unsettle,' 1794.

STANZA IV. LINE 2. 'Below the fatt'rils, snug *and* tight,'
1786, 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793. 3. 'Na, *haith!* ye yet!
ye'll no be right,' MS. 5. 'The vera *upmost topmost* height,'
MS.; 'tapmost *towrin*,' 1786.

STANZA V. LINE 5. 'I'd gie ye sic a hearty *dous* o't,' 1794.

STANZA VI. LINE 3. 'Or *may be* some bit duddie boy,' MS.

STANZA VII. LINE 1. 'O, *Jeany*, dianna toss your head,'
MS.

STANZA VIII. LINE 2. 'To see *oursel* as ithers see us,' MS.

EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK

JOHN LAPRAIK, whose song, *When I upon Thy Bosom Lean*, 'so thirl'd the heart-strings' of Burns, was descended from an old Ayrshire family, which for several generations possessed the estate of Laigh Dalquhram, near Muirkirk. He was born in 1727; succeeded to the estate on the death of his father, and also rented the farm and mill of Muirsmill; lost his estate and all his means by the failure of the Ayr Bank in 1772; was inspired by Burns's success to publish *Poems on Several Occasions* (1788); and died 7th May 1807.

Lapraik's song, so warmly praised by Burns, and afterwards sent by him for insertion to Johnson's *Museum*, iii. 214 (1790), closely resembles one in Ruddiman's *Weekly Magazine*, 11th October 1773, *When On Thy Bosom I Recline*, dated Edinburgh, 11th October, and signed 'Happy Husband.' It has been too rashly inferred that Lapraik plagiarised from this lyric: he may have written it himself. Another, *When West Winds did*

Blow, which Burns also sent to Johnson, is not without merit. The original *Epistle* was at one time in the possession of Sir Robert Jardine, and the piece is also entered in the *First Common Place Book* under date June 1785.

STANZA II. LINE 1. 'On Fasten-een we had a rockin':— The term 'rockin' is thus explained by Gilbert Burns:—'Derived from those primitive times, when the country-women employed their spare hours in spinning on the rock, or distaff. This simple implement is a very portable one, and well fitted on the social inclination of meeting in a neighbour's house; hence the phrase of *going a-rocking*, or *with the rock*.'

STANZA III. LINE 5. 'It *thrill'd* the heart-strings through the breast,' 1787 (2); 'It *touched the feelings o' the breast*,' MS.

STANZA IV. LINES 1-2 read thus in the MS. :—

'I've scarce heard ought I *pleas'd* sae weel,
The style sae tastie and genteel.'

STANZA V. LINES 1-2 in the MS. read thus :—

'My heart was *fdgin'* fain to hear 't,
And sae about him a' I speirt.'

3-6 read thus :—

'He was a devil
But had a frank and friendly heart,
Discreet and civil.'

STANZA VIII. LINES 2-3 in the MS. read thus :—

'Amaist *since ever* I could spell
I've dealt in makin' rhymes mysel.'

5-6 read thus :—

'But croonin at a *pleugh or flail*
Do well enough.'

STANZA X. LINE 3. 'You wha ken hardly verse *by* prose,' MS. 5. 'But, by your leaves, my learned foes':—Burns's use of the plural of *leave* has been objected to, and it has been supposed to be a printer's error; but it occurs in the *First Common Place Book*, and the fact that *leaf* has the same plural does not necessarily deprive *leave* of its own.

EPISTLE STANZA XII. LINE 1. 'A set of *silly senseless asses*,' MS.
TO J. 4. 'Thus *sae* to speak,' MS. 5. 'And *then* they think to climb
LAPRAIK Parnassus,' MS.

STANZA XIV. LINE 2. 'Or Fergusson's, the bauld *and* *slee*,'
1794. 3. 'Or *tight* Lapraik, my friend to be,' MS.

STANZA XV. LINE 3. 'But if your catalogue be *fou*,' 1793
and 1794.

STANZA XVI. LINE 3. 'But friends *and* folks that wish me
well,' 1794.

STANZA XXI. LINE 2. 'Whose hearts *true generous friend-*
ship warms,' MS.

SECOND EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK

ENTERED in the *First Common Place Book* under *The First Epistle* with this explanation:—'On receiving an answer to the above I wrote the following.'

STANZA I. LINE 2. 'An' pownies reek *at* pleugh or *brahe*,
MS.

STANZA II. LINE 5. 'My *dowie* muse sair pleads and begs,'
MS. 6. 'I *wou'd* na write,' 1794.

STANZA III. LINE 2. 'She's saft at best *and* something lazy,'
1794. 3. 'Quo' she, ye ken, I've been *sae* *bissie*,' MS.

STANZA V. LINE 1. 'Shall bauld Lapraik, the *Ace* o' hearts,'

STANZA VI. LINES 2-3 in the MS. read thus:—

'And in *went* stumple in the ink,
Says I before I sleep a wink.'

STANZA VII. LINE 1. 'But *what* my *theme's* to be, or
whether,' MS.

STANZA X. is omitted in the MS.

STANZA XI. LINE 2. 'Behind a kist to lie an' sklent,' 1787
(2); 'Behint a kist to lie *and* sklent,' 1794. 4. 'And muckle
wame,' 1794.

STANZA XII. LINE 3. 'Nae sheep-shank bane':—*i.e.* a
personage of no small importance. 5. 'While caps *and*
bonnets aff are taen,' MS. 1787 (1), 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794.

STANZA XIII. LINE 1. 'May *He* wha *gives* us each *good* gift,'
MS. 3. 'Then *the* he turn me out adrift,' MS.

STANZA XVI. LINE 2. 'The followers o' the ragged Nine': —Motherwell and some other editors adopt the reading, 'The ragged followers o' the Nine'; but Burns wrote and steadily passed the verse as it is printed. It is classically inexact; but the proposed change would be no improvement, since the followers of the Nine should surely have no special characteristics which the Nine have not.

SECOND
EPISTLE
TO J.
LAPRAIK

STANZA XVII. Lines 1-2 in the MS. read thus:—

'Tho' here they *grunt*, an' *scrape*, an' growl,
Their *silly nivesfow* o' a soul.'

5. 'Or in a day-detesting owl,' MS.

STANZA XVIII. LINE 1. '*Lapraik an' Burness then may rise*,' MS. :—A transposition was necessary when the poet adopted the spelling 'Burns.' 2. '*And reach their native kindred skies*,' MS.

TO WILLIAM SIMPSON OF OCHILTREE

THE 'winsome Willie' of this *Epistle* was William Simpson, son of John Simpson, farmer in Ten-Pound Land, in the parish of Ochiltree. He was born 23rd August 1758; was educated at the University of Glasgow; became parish schoolmaster of Ochiltree in 1780, and in 1788 of Cumnock; and died 4th July 1815. It has been inferred that the piece which drew the flattering letter from him was *The Two Herds*. But the inference is not supported by the evidence adduced—the statement of Burns himself, that he gave a copy of that satire to 'a particular friend'; for Burns affirmed to this same friend that he did not know who was the author, and had got a copy by accident.

STANZA III. LINE 1. 'My senses wad be in a creel':—A creel is an ozier basket. To be 'in a creel' is to be perplexed, muddled, or fascinated: a sense probably derived from the old Scottish marriage custom of 'creeling.' 3. 'Wi' Allan/ or wi' Gilbertfield':—Allan Ramsay, of course, and his con-

TO temporary, Hamilton of Gilbertfield (see *ante*, p. 344, Prefatory Note to *The Death and Dying Words of Poor Maillie*),
WILLIAM whom, with Fergusson, Burns was accustomed to regard as
SIMPSON his models; but, as he states in his Preface to the Kilmarnock Edition, 'rather with a view to kindle at their flame, than for servile imitation.'

STANZA VI. LINE 1. 'Auld Coila, now, may fidge fu' fain':—'Coila' is the district of Kyle in Ayrshire. 2. 'She's gotten *Poets o'* her ain,' 1794. 3. 'Chiels wha their chanter's winna hain':—Chanter is properly a bagpipe (see *ante*, p. 346, Note to *Poor Maillie's Elegy*) STANZA VIII. LINE 2.

STANZA VII. LINE 2. 'To set her name in measur'd *stille*,' 1794.

STANZA X. LINE 5. 'Frae *Southron* billies,' 1794.

STANZA XIX. LINE 4. 'By this "New-Light"':—In the Edinburgh Editions Burns refers to a note to *The Ordination*:—'*New Light* is a cant phrase in the West of Scotland for those religious opinions which Dr. Taylor of Norwich has defended so strenuously.' The names, 'New Light' and 'Old Light,' were subsequently assumed by separate divisions of the Secession Church of Scotland, which became merged in the United Presbyterian Church.

STANZA XXI. LINE 4. 'Gaed past their *viewing*,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794.

STANZA XXVI. LINE 5. 'Till lairds *forbad* by strict commands,' 1786.

EPISTLE TO JOHN RANKINE

RANKINE was farmer at Adamhill, in the parish of Craigie, near Lochlie. His wit, his dreams (invented for the purpose of roasting his dislikes), and his practical jokes, were the talk of the countryside. His sister, Margaret, was the first wife of John Lapraik, and his daughter, Anne, afterwards Mrs. Merry, vaunted herself the heroine of *The Rigs o' Barley*. Burns also addressed to Rankine a *Reply to an Announcement*, and compliments him in an *Epitaph* as the one 'honest man' in 'a mixtie-maxtie motley squad.'

It is to be noted that the last seven stanzas of this piece set forth an account in good venereal slang—(e.g. 'straik' [i.e. 'stroke'] = *subagitare*; 'hen,' 'wame,' 'tail,' 'gun,' 'feathers,' and so forth)—of Burns's amour with Elizabeth Paton, by whom he had an illegitimate child (November 1784), and with whom he did penance by order of the Session.

EPISTLE
TO JOHN
RANKINE

STANZA I. LINE 4. 'Your dreams and tricks':— 'A certain humorous dream of his was then making a noise in the countryside' (R. B.).

STANZA IV. LINE 2. 'The Blue-gown badge an' claithing':—This was the livery of a licensed order of beggars known as the King's bedesmen [no doubt in earlier years a religious fraternity], whose number coincided with that of the King's years. Every Maunday Thursday they received a new outfit, which included a blue gown and a pewter badge on which were inscribed the words: 'Pass and Repass.' Sir Walter immortalized the craft in the Edie Ochiltree of *The Antiquary*. 3. 'O saunts; tak that, ye lea'e them *naithing*,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794.

STANZA V. LINE 1. 'I've sent you here some *rhymin* ware,' 1786. 5. 'Yon sang ye 'll sen't, wi' cannie care':— 'A song he had promised the author' (R. B.).

STANZA VI. LINE 5. 'I'd better gaen an' *sair'd* the king,' 1794.

STANZA VIII. LINE 2. 'I *strakit* it a wee for sport,' 1794.

STANZA X. LINE 5. 'The game shall pay owre moor an' *dail*,' 1786; 'o'er' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), 1793 and 1794.

STANZA XI. LINE 4. 'For my gowd guinea':—It was the custom of the Kirk-Session to require the person who had been disciplined for fornication to testify to the sincerity of his penitence by contributing a guinea for the poor. 5. 'Tho' I should herd the buckskin kye':— 'Buckskin' is slang for Virginian, and 'kye' for niggers.

SONG

TUNE: *Corn Riys*

IN an interleaved copy of Johnson's *Museum*, Burns remarks:— 'All the old words that ever I could meet to

SONG this were the following which seem to have been an old chorus :—

“ O corn rigs and rye rigs,
O corn rigs are bonie,
And when'er you meet a bonnie lass,
Preen up her cockernony.”

The last song in Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd, My Patie is a Lover Gay*, to the tune *Corn Rigs are Bonny*, concludes as follows :—

‘ Then I'll comply and marry Pate,
And syne my cockernony
He's free to touzle air and late
Where corn rigs are bonny.’

Burns wrote to George Thomson :—‘ *My Patie is a Lover Gay*—is unequal. “His mind is never muddy,” is a muddy expression indeed.

“ Then I'll resign (*sic*) and marry Pate,
And syne my cockernony,” etc.

This is surely far unworthy of Ramsay, or of your work.’ With characteristic deference he added :—‘ My song, *Rigs o' Barley*, to the same tune, does not altogether please me, but if I can mend it, I will submit it to your consideration.’ Thomson disregarded this modest offer :—‘ *My Patie is a Lover Gay*, though a little unequal, is a natural and pleasing song, and I humbly think we ought not to displace it or alter it except the last stanza.’

In his Autobiographical Letter to Dr. Moore, Burns includes this admirable lyric among the ‘rhymes’ of his ‘early days,’ composed before his twenty-third year. But its accomplishment is finer than he had then compassed, and, as in the case of the lyric that follows, *Now Westlin' Winds*, the early version was probably a mere fragmentary suggestion of the later. Burns was himself accustomed to regard the last stanza as a nearer approach to his ideal of expression and sentiment than he had

achieved elsewhere. As to the heroine there is not basis enough even for conjecture, though divers Annies have claimed the honour.

SONG : COMPOSED IN AUGUST

BURNS states in his 'autobiographical letter' that this song was the 'ebullition' of his passion for a 'charming *filette*' (*sic*), Peggy Thomson, who 'overset his trigonometry' at Kirkoswald when he was in his seventeenth year. His sister, Mrs. Begg, further affirms that the passion was afterwards revived, and it has been supposed that Thomson is the Peggy of his letter to Thomas Orr (11th November 1784):—'I am very glad Peggy is off my hand.' But about this time he had also an 'affair' with 'Montgomerie's Peggy,' 'which,' as he wrote in the *First Common Place Book*, 'it cost some heart-aches to get rid of.' Peggy Thomson became the wife of Mr. Neilson of Kirkoswald. Burns—when he was making ready for the West Indies in 1786—presented her with a copy of his book, on which he inscribed the lines beginning:—

'Once fondly loved and still remembered dear.'

Mrs. Begg told Robert Chambers that she had seen a transcript with the name 'Jean' instead of 'Peggy,' and the word 'Armour' instead of 'charmer' at the end of the first and fifth verses. This is partly corroborated by the *First Common Place Book*, where, under the title *Hairste—A Fragment—ms. (A)*—the first stanza ends with 'Jeanie Armour' in cypher. The *ms.—ms. (B)*—sent for Johnson's *Museum*, iv. 363 (1792)—is in the British Museum: its text is that adopted here. The song was also printed by George Thomson, less the second and third stanzas, and *plus* an idiot chorus, 'added by the Editor' to adapt it to the tune of *Ally Ooker*. For other minor variations—presumably Thomson's own—the reader is referred to his *Original Scottish Airs*, vol. ii.

SONG STANZA I. LINE 1. '*Now breezy win's* and slaughtering
COMPOSED GUNS,' MS. (A). 3. '*And the muircock* springs on whirring
IN AUGUST wings,' MS. (A); '*moorcock*' MS. (B), and Author's Editions.
5. '*Now waving crops with yellow tops*,' MS. (A); '*And* the
moon shines bright *when* I rove at night,' MS. (A), and also
Author's Editions, with '*An*' for '*And*'; '*And*' in Johnson,
but not in MS. (B). 8. '*To muse upon Jean Armour*,' MS.
(A).

STANZA II. LINE 1. '*The partridge loves the fruitful fells*,'
Author's Editions. 2. '*The plover loves the mountains*,'
Author's Editions. 6. '*The path of man to shun it*,' Author's
Editions.

STANZA IV. LINE 8. '*And ev'ry happy creature*,' Author's
Editions.

STANZA V. LINE 2. '*Till the silent moon shines clearly*,'
Author's Editions. 3. '*I'll grasp thy waist and, fondly prest*,'
Author's Editions, which have also '*love*' in 4.

FAREWELL TO ELIZA

BURNS, on his return to Mauchline from his Border tour,
wrote to James Smith, 11th June 1787:—'*Your mother,*
sister and brother, my quondam Eliza, etc., all, all well.'
This shows that Eliza lived in Mauchline. She was
Elizabeth Miller—afterwards Mrs. Templeton—celebrated
in *The Mauchline Belles* (vol. ii.) as the '*Miss Betty*'
who's '*braw*.' See also *A Mauchline Wedding* (vol. ii.).

THE FAREWELL

'At this time the author intended going to Jamaica'
(MS. R. B. in a copy of the '86 Edition in the British
Museum). Burns was admitted an apprentice of the
St. David's Lodge, Tarbolton (formed by the union of
the St. James's with the St. David's), 4th July 1781, and,
when a separation of the Lodges occurred in June 1782,
he adhered to the St. James's, of which he was, on 22nd

July 1784, elected depute-master. The verses, it is supposed, were recited at a meeting of the Lodge held on the 23rd June. But they are not now in the Lodge's possession. THE FAREWELL

For the stave, see *ante*, p. 371, Prefatory Note to *The Lament*.

STANZA IV. 1-4. The master of the Lodge at this date was Captain James Montgomerie, a younger brother of Colonel Hugh Montgomerie, afterwards Earl of Eglinton.

STANZA V. LINE 3. 'Ye favoured, enlighten'd few,' 1786, 1787 (1) and 1787 (2).

EPITAPH ON A HENPECKED HUSBAND

IN a *ms.* note on a copy of the '86 Edition in the British Museum, Burns states that the subject of this epitaph was 'Mr. Campbell of Netherplace,' a mansion a little to the west of Mauchline, on the road to Mossgiel. It is probable that Campbell—or perhaps his wife—had given Burns some particular offence. Campbell died in 1786, and the *Epitaph* was not reprinted by Burns. Neither was the

EPIGRAM ON SAID OCCASION

nor

ANOTHER.

EPITAPHS

ON A CELEBRATED RULING ELDER

IN the Author's Edition the Elder's name is indicated merely by asterisks; in a copy of the '86 in the British Museum, 'Hood' is inserted; and in the *First Common Place Book*, under the date April 1784, the heading is, 'Epitaph on Wm. Hood, senr. in Tarbolton.'

ON A NOISY POLEMIC

JAMES HUMPHRY, a mason in Mauchline, with no doubt of his ability to debate with Burns. He died in 1844.

ON WEE JOHNNIE

It is common to assume that Burns meant this for his own printer, John Wilson of Kilmarnock ; but there was a bookseller in Mauchline, also of diminutive stature, named John Wilson. It has further been denoted, by Chambers, that the trifle is a literal translation of a Latin epigram in *Nugæ Venales*, 1663.

FOR THE AUTHOR'S FATHER

WILLIAM BURNES died at Lochlie, 13th February 1784 ; and this *Epitaph on my Ever Honoured Father* was inserted in the *First Common Place Book* under the date April of that year. It is engraved on the tombstone in Alloway Churchyard.

LINE 1. 'O ye! who sympathise with virtue's pains,' MS. Also 'O ye! whose hearts decess'd merit pains.' 8. 'And "even his failings lean'd to virtue's side"':—'Goldsmith' (R. B.).

FOR ROBERT AIKEN, Esq.

See *ante*, p. 363, Note to *The Cotter's Saturday Night*.

FOR GAVIN HAMILTON, Esq.

See *ante*, p. 378, Prefatory Note to *The Dedication*.

A BARD'S EPITAPH

STANZA I. LINE 1. 'Is there a whim-*inspir'd* fool,' 1786, 1787 (1), and 1787 (2).

STANZA II. LINE 3. 'That weekly this *aréa* throng':—Some editors substitute '*arena*' for '*aréa*'; but Burns did not regard the churchyard as an '*arena*' except on the occasion of a Holy Fair.

STANZA III. LINE 4. 'Here pause, and *through* the starting tear,' 1793 and 1794.

DEATH AND DR. HORNBOOK

ACCORDING to Gilbert Burns, Hornbook was one John Wilson, parish schoolmaster of Tarbolton. To eke out his salary he opened a grocer's shop, where he 'added the sale of a few medicines to his little trade,' informing the public in a shop bill that 'advice would be given in common disorders at the shop gratis.' At a 'masonic meeting at Tarbolton in the spring of 1785' Wilson happened to air 'his medical skill' in the presence of Burns, who—says Gilbert—as he parted with him in the evening at 'the place where he describes the meeting with Death' was visited by 'one of those floating ideas of apparitions he mentions in his letter to Dr. Moore.' The visitation suggested a train of thoughts which he began running into *Death and Dr. Hornbook* on his way home. If Lockhart may be believed, the satire ruined Wilson in Tarbolton: not only was he compelled to shut his shop, but also he had presently to close his school. But, as he continued to act as Session-Clerk down to at least 8th January 1793 (Letter in *Burns Chronicle*, 1895, p. 138), Lockhart must have been in some sort misinformed. Nevertheless, Wilson did remove to Glasgow, where he became schoolmaster and Session-Clerk of the Gorbals parish. He died 13th January 1839.

= 'I would be dangerous ; to be unmannerly, I wouldn't mind it,' etc.

STANZA XI. LINE 2. 'Come *gies* your hand,' all Editions ; also in 4, '*gies*.' 6. 'At monie a house':—'An epidemical fever was then raging in that country' (R. B.).

DEATH
AND DR.
HORN-
BOOK

STANZA XIV. LINE 1. 'Ye ken *Jock Hornbook* i' the clachan':—'This gentleman, Dr. Hornbook, is professionally a brother of the sovereign order of the ferula; but, by intuition and inspiration, is at once an apothecary, surgeon, and physician' (R. B.). 2. 'Deil mak his king's hood in a spleuchan':—The king's hood is the second stomach in a ruminant, but it is plain that here Burns uses the term in a very different sense. A spleuchan is a tobacco-pouch made of an animal's pelt. 3. 'He's grown sae weel acquaint wi' *Buchan*':—'Buchan's Domestic Medicine' (R. B.). This work by Dr. William Buchan (born 1729; died 1805) was first published in 1769, and continued to enjoy its popularity in country households long after the death of Burns.

STANZA XXIII. LINE 1. 'Waes me for *Johnie Ged's Hole* now':—'The grave-digger' (R. B.). 'Ged' is Scots for pike, whose greed is as the grave's.

STANZA XXV. LINE 2. 'By loss o' blood or want *of* breath,' 1794. 5. 'By drap *and* pill,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793.

STANZA XXVII. LINE 4. '*And* pays him well,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793.

STANZA XXX. LINE 6. 'He gets his fairin':—Literally a present from a fair. It was long a custom of peasants returning from the fair to throw bags of confectionery to children. This was the children's 'fairin.' But the word came to be used, as here, sarcastically, to signify a beating. Cf. *Tam o' Shanter*:—

'Ah, Tam ! Ah, Tam ! thou 'll get thy fairin !
In hell they 'll roast thee like a herrin !'

THE BRIGS OF AYR

JOHN BALLANTINE—to whom Burns dedicated this poem, and who was one of his warmest friends—was eldest son of Baillie William Ballantine, banker and merchant in Ayr, and Elizabeth Bowman; born 22nd July 1743;

THE succeeded to his father's business; was a most active
 BRIGS OF citizen, and a prime mover in the project for a new
 AYR bridge; was elected provost of the burgh in 1787; and
 died 15th July 1812.

In a letter to Robert Aiken, 7th October 1786, Burns, after narrating the failure of his attempts to persuade Wilson to publish a second edition, states that one of his chief regrets was that he was thus deprived of an opportunity for showing his gratitude to Ballantine by publishing *The Brigs of Ayr*. The New Bridge, designed by Robert Adam of London, the most famous of the four brothers, was erected 1785-88. The boast of the 'Auld Brig' that it would 'be a brig' when its neighbour was a 'shapeless cairn' was justified in 1877, when the New Bridge was so injured by floods that it had to be practically rebuilt at a cost of £15,000, additional repairs being found necessary in 1881.

The Brigs of Ayr, like *To Robert Graham of Fintry* (p. 271), is set forth in the heroic couplet. The technical inspiration is unmistakably English in both; and, accordingly, the verse in both is handled with a certain awkwardness, while the effect is often rough, and even ragged. This is the more surprising, as the couplet had a past of its own in Scottish poetry. To say nothing of late and early chaps and tracts, it is the rhythmus of Blind Harry's *Wallace* (c. 1460); of *The Three Priests of Peebles* (c. 1500); of Gavin Douglas's *Eneados* (1513); of that masterly and brilliant piece of comic narrative, generally (and, no doubt, rightly) ascribed to Dunbar, *The Freire of Berwick*; of Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*; and of Fergusson's *Drink and Kirkyard Eclogues*, of which last, and of the same poet's *Plainstones and Causey*, the present piece is strongly reminiscent.

It was probably composed between July and October 1786. An early draft—ms. (A)—in the possession of Mr. Waugh of Settle, who forwarded it for collation, retains some of the old endings peculiar to the '86

Edition. Here the heading is *The Brigs of Ayr—an Eclogue*. For the privilege of inspecting another—*MS. (B)*—apparently of slightly later date, we are indebted to the Earl of Rosebery. In this one the poem is styled *The Brigs of Ayr—a True Story*.

THE
BRIGS OF
AYR

LINE 21. 'When Ballantine befriends *the* humble name,' *MS. (A)*. 30. 'Unnumbered buds' and *flowerets'* *nectrine* spoils,' *MS. (A)*. 33. 'The death o' devils smoor'd wi' *brun-*
stane reek,' *MSS.* 51. 'He *leaves* his bed and *takes* his wayward rout,' *MS. (B)*. 52. 'And down by Simpson's wheels the left about,' *MS. (B)*:—'A noted tavern at the Auld Brig end' (*R. B.*). 55. Immediately before this line these two occur in both *MSS.* :—

*'Or penitential pangs for former sins
Led him to rove by quondam Merran Din's.'*

56. 'He wandered *out* he knew not where or why':—All the Author's Editions have '*out*,' but '*forth*,' as in both *MSS.*, is preferable. 57. 'The drowsy *steeple*-clock had numbered two,' *MS. (A)*:—Concerning the 'clock' and the 'Wallace Tower' of the next verse Burns notes:—'The two steeples.' The former stood 135 feet high, fronted the old jail near the new bridge, and was removed, together with the jail, in 1826; the latter—a small baronial structure in the High Street—was superseded in 1834 by a Gothic building 113 feet high, in which were placed the clock and bells of the old Dungeon Steeple. 65-6 in *MS. (A)* read as follows:—

*'When lo! before our Bardie's wondering een,
The brigs of Ayr twa guardian Sprites are seen';*

but this reading is deleted and the other is substituted. 68. 'Swift as the gos drives on the wheeling hare':—'The gos-hawk or falcon' (*R. B.*). 69. 'And on th' Auld Brig his *fairy* shape uprears,' *MS. (A)*. 79. 'He seem'd as he wi' Time had *wrestl'd* lang,' *MS. (A)*; '*look'd*' for '*seem'd*,' *MS. (B)*. 80. 'He bade an unco bang':—'Bang' refers to the great number of years the bridge had stood. 91. 'Nae sheepshank bane':—See Note to *Second Epistle to J. Lapraik, ante*, p. 382, STANZA XII. Line 3. 92. 'Ance ye were streekit o'er frae bank to bank,' 1794. 94-5:—'*ate*' and '*day*' in these lines are

THE transposed in the '94 Edition. 99-100 are omitted from MS. (A).
 BRIGS OF 101. 'Your *tasteless* formless bulk o' stane an' lime,' MS. (B),
 AYR 'and lime,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793; 'Will your *could*
formless bulk o' stane an' lime,' MS. (A). 103. 'There's men of
 taste would tak' the Ducat stream':—'A noted ford, just above
 the Auld Brig' (R. B.). 108. 'This mony a year I've *stem't*
 the flood an' tide,' MSS. 117. 'Or where the Greenock winds
its moorland course,' MS. (A). 118. 'Or haunted Garpal
 draws *its* feeble source,' MSS.:—'The banks of Garpal water is
 one of the few places in the West of Scotland where those
 fancy-scaring beings, known by the name of Ghaists, still con-
 tinue pertinaciously to inhabit' (R. B.). 120. 'In mony a
 torrent down the *ma*-broo rowes,' 1794. 123. 'And from
 Glenbuck down to the Ratton-key':—R. B. explains that Glen-
 buck is 'the source of the river Ayr,' and that the Ratton-key
 is 'a small landing place above the large quay.' 142. 'Man-
 sions that would disgrace the *biggin* trade,' MS. (A). 146. 'Or
 cuifs of *latter* times wha held the notion,' 1794. 148. 'Fancies
 that our guid brugh denies protection':—Both Dr. Macgill of
 Ayr and his colleague Mr. Dalrymple belonged to the New
 Light party in the Church, which party was consequently
 predominant in the burgh; but this piece was written before
 the M'Gill prosecution (see *The Kirk's Alarm*). 164-5 are
 omitted from MS. (A). 171. 'The herryment and ruin o'
their country,' MS. (A). 175. 'And muckle mair *I doubt*
than ye can through,' MS. (B). After 175 the following lines
 occur in MS. (A):—

'That's ay a string auld doyted Greybeards harp on,
 A topic for their peevishness to carp on.'

180-1 read as follows in MS. (A):—

'To liken them to your auld-warld *bodies*,
 I must needs say, "comparisons are *odious*."'

MS. (B) has the same reading, with '*even*' for 'liken.' Instead
 of 184-5, as printed, MS. (A) has this:—

'Nae mair *down street* the council quorum waddles
 With wigs like mainsails on their logger noddles,
 Nae differences but bulkiest or tallest,
 With comfortable dulness in for ballast;
 Nor shoals nor currents need a pilot's caution,
 For, regularly slow, they only witness motion.'

MS. (B) has the same reading, except that the two middle lines run thus :—

*'Nae difference but whase mainmast is tallest,
All comfortably charg'd alike in leaden ballast.'*

THE
BRIGS OF
AYR

186-7 in MS. (B) read thus :—

*'Wights who grew wise prigg'in' owre hops an' raisins
Or gather'd lib'ral views in musty bonds and seisions.'*

190. 'And would to *sense's* Port for once betrayed them,' MS. (B) 191. 'Plain kind stupidity *stept in* to aid them,' MS. (A); '*veer'd* kindly in,' MS. (B). 202. 'O, had M'Laughlin, thairm-inspiring sage' :—'A well-known performer of Scottish music on the violin' (R. B.). M'Laughlin was accustomed to give performances in the West of Scotland. 205. 'Or when they *touch'd* old Scotia's melting airs,' MS. (A). 225. 'Next followed Courage' :—The reference is to the Montgomeries (see *ante*, p. 325, Note to *The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer*, STANZA X. Line 3), through whose grounds the Feal flowed. 227. 'Benevolence,' *etc.* :—Mrs. Stewart of Stair. 229. 'Learning and Worth' :—The reference is to Professor Dugald Stewart, who resided at Catrine House (see *ante*, p. 354, Note to *The Vision*, DUAN I. STANZA XXI. Line 2).

THE ORDINATION

IN a letter to Richmond (17th February 1786), Burns mentions that he had composed *The Ordination*, and describes it as 'a poem on Mr. M'Kinley's being called to Kilmarnock.' Probably he intended to publish it in the '86 Edition, which he was then contemplating, and had called it *The Ordination* to that end; nevertheless, as appears from the letter, not only was it written before the ordination, which took place 6th April, but also it was not even written in view thereof—it only celebrated the presentation. Moreover, an early copy—MS. (A)—in the possession of Lord Rosebery, has merely this heading, 'A Scotch Poem, by Rab Rhymer.'

James Mackinlay, born at Douglas, Lanarkshire, in

THE ORDINATION 1756, was first presented to the second charge of the Laigh Kirk, Kilmarnock, in the August of 1786. He declined the presentation on account of certain conditions attached to it. Presentation to another was made out on 15th November, but the messenger to the Presbytery of Irvine was despoiled of the warrant by certain parishioners. Thereupon a new presentation was made out for Mackinlay, who was ordained on 6th April following; was translated to the first charge, on a petition of the parishioners, 31st January 1809; was made D.D., Aberdeen, 1810; died 10th February 1841. A volume of his *Sermons* was published posthumously, with a *Life* by his son, Rev. James Mackinlay. Like Russell, he had a rousing voice; but his oratory was more persuasive and less menacing than Russell's. In a note to *Tam Samson's Elegy* Burns describes him 'as a great favourite of the million.' In *The Kirk's Alarm* he is addressed as 'Simpser James.' His more than partiality for the 'fair Killie dames' drew on him a presbyterial rebuke some years afterwards.

In all probability the satire was composed immediately after the second presentation. In ms. (A) the motto is signed *Ruisseaux*, which is playful French for 'Burns' (=brooks). Another ms.—ms. (B)—was before the Aldine editor, 1839. For the stave see *ante*, p. 328, Prefatory Note to *The Holy Fair*.

STANZA I. LINE I. 'Kilmarnock wabsters, fidge and claw,' 1793. 6. 'Then aff to Crookes's in a raw,' MS. (A):—In 1786, apparently, Begbie succeeded Crookes in the inn—now the Angel Hotel—near the Laigh Kirk, with which it was connected by a close so narrow that worshippers had to traverse it in Indian file.

STANZA II. LINE I. 'Curst Common-sense, that imp o' hell':—'Common sense' was supposed to be a special attribute of the moderate clergy. 2. 'Cam in wi' Maggie Lauder':—'Alluding to a scoffing ballad which was made on the admission of the late Reverend and worthy Mr. Lindsay to the Laigh

Kirk' (R. B. in '87 and subsequent Editions).—'I suppose the author here means Mrs. Lindsay, wife of the late Reverend and worthy Mr. Lindsay, as that was her maiden name, I am told. *N.B.*—He got the Laigh Kirk of Kilmarnock' (R. B. in ms. [A]). The 'scoffing ballad' is reprinted in M'Kay's *History of Kilmarnock*. According to current rumour, the Rev. William Lindsay, being minister at Cumbræ, was, through his wife's interest (she had been house-keeper, or governess, in the Glencairn family) presented to the Laigh Kirk, Kilmarnock, by the Earl of Glencairn, 30th November 1762. But a Mr. Henderson, her descendant, maintains, in a series of letters to Robert Chambers (ms. correspondence in an interleaved copy of Chambers's *Burns*, 1851, vol. i. in the Kilmarnock Monument Museum), that she never was a member of the Glencairn household in any capacity; and explains that Lindsay had been tutor to the Earl of Glencairn. The Presbytery refused to sustain the call, but it was finally sustained by the General Assembly, in the teeth of so determined an opposition that the ordination (12th July 1764) took place in a public-house: with the result that ten persons were tried before the criminal court at Ayr for riot and assault, of whom three were convicted and whipped through the town. 3. 'But Oliphant aft made her yell':—James Oliphant, born about 1734: Russell's predecessor in the chapel-of-ease or High Church, Kilmarnock, to which he was translated from Gorbals chapel-of-ease, Glasgow; was ordained at Kilmarnock, 17th May 1764; translated to Dumbarton, 23rd December 1773; died 10th April 1818, in his eighty-fourth year.—Author of a *Mother's Catechism* (frequently reprinted), and a *Sacramental Catechism*. 4. 'An' Russell sair misca'd her.'—See *ante*, p. 334, Note to *The Holy Fair*, STANZA XXI., Line 4. 5. 'This day Mackinlay tak the flail.'—See Prefatory Note.

STANZA III. LINE 2. 'O' double verse':—The Scottish *Metrical Psalms* are set forth in staves, each composed of a double quatrain. 4. 'An' skirl up the *Bangor*':—A favourite Scottish Psalm tune in the minor mode.

STANZA IV. LINE 1. 'Come wale a text a proper verse,' MSS. (A and B). 3. 'How Ham leugh at his father's arse,' MSS. (A and B):—'Genesis ix. 22' (R. B.). 5. 'Or Phineas

THE *did four buttocks pierce,* MSS. (A and B) :—(Scott Douglas mentions a variation, '*did fair Cosbi pierce*') :—'Numbers xxv. 8' (R. B). 7. '*Or Zipporah wi' scaulding hearse,*' MSS. (A. and B) :—'Exodus iv. 25' (R. B.)

STANZA V. LINES 2-5 in MSS. (A and B) read thus :—

*'Wi' form'la an' confession ;
An' lay your hands upon his head
An' seal his high commission,
The Holy flock to tent an' feed.'*

STANZA VI. LINE 5. '*For lapfu's large o' gospel fowls,*' MS. (A). 9. '*But every day,*' MS. (A).

STANZA VIII. LINE 3. '*As lately Fenwick, sair forfairn*' :—William Boyd, born 1747, was presented to the church of Fenwick by George, Earl of Glasgow, 20th September 1780; but on account of the opposition of the parishioners (who barricaded the church) a settlement was not effected until 25th June 1782, when, by order of the Assembly, the ordination took place at Irvine. Boyd afterwards won the respect of his parishioners. He died 17th October 1828.

STANZA IX. LINE 1. '*Now Robertson harangue nae mair*' :—John Robertson, ordained to the first charge, Kilmarnock, 25th April 1765; died 5th June 1799, in his sixty-seventh year. He belonged to the Common-sense party. See *Tam Samson's Elegy, post*, p. 403. 7. '*Or to the Netherton repair*' :—A carpet-weaving district in Kilmarnock.

STANZA X. LINE 1. '*Mu'trie and you were just a match*' :—John Multrie, Lindsay's successor, and predecessor of Mackinlay in the second charge of the Laigh Kirk, was ordained 8th March 1775; he died 2nd June 1785, in his fortieth year. 9. '*In haste this day,*' MS. (A); '*Fu fast this day,*' MS. (B).

STANZA XI. LINE 8. '*To mak to Jamie Beattie*' :—Dr. James Beattie, author of the *Essay on Truth*.

STANZA XIII. LINE 3. '*Morality's delusive joys,*' MS. (B). In MS. (A) 3-4 read as follows :—

*'Get up—wha ever's fit to rise
An' thro' the room let's shorter.'*

6. '*That heresy can torture,*' MS. (B).

STANZA XIV. LINE 3. 'To every New Light mother's son': —'New Light' is a cant phrase in the West of Scotland for those religious opinions which Dr. Taylor of Norwich has so strenuously defended' (R. B.).

THE
ORDINA-
TION

THE CALF

'A NEARLY extemporaneous production, on a wager with Mr. Hamilton that I would not produce a poem on the subject in a given time':—R. B., *Letter to Robert Muir*, 8th September 1786. It was written on Sunday, 3rd September, after listening to a sermon by the Rev. James Steven. As originally composed and read to Gavin Hamilton and Dr. Mackenzie, it consisted of four stanzas only; but on the Sunday evening at eight o'clock Burns sent a copy to Dr. Mackenzie with two more—the fourth and the sixth. It was printed in 1787 (presumably before its appearance in the Edinburgh Edition), with some other verses, in a tract called *The Calf*; *The Unco Calf's Answer*; *Virtue to a Mountain Bard*; and *the Deil's Answer to his vera worthy Frien Robert Burns*. An explanation was added that *The Calf* had been sent to *The Glasgow Advertiser*, but declined. The same year appeared *Burns' Calf turned a Bull; or Some Remarks on his mean and unprecedented attack on Mr S—— when preaching from Malachi iv. 2.*

James Steven, a native of Kilmarnock, was licensed to preach 28th June 1786; acted for some time as assistant to Robert Dow, minister of Ardrossan; was ordained minister of Crown Court Chapel, London, 1st November 1787; was one of the founders of the London Missionary Society; was admitted minister of Kilwinning, 28th March 1803; and died of apoplexy 15th February 1824. William Burns, Robert's younger brother, in a letter of 20th March 1790, thus chronicles a visit to Steven's church:—'We were at Covent Garden Chapel this forenoon to hear the *Calf* preach; he is grown very fat, and is as boisterous as ever.'

THE CALF The copy sent to Dr. Mackenzie was inspected by Scott Douglas. It contains a few variations from the printed version.

STANZA II. LINES 1-2 in the MS. reads thus:—

'And *when* some patron *shall* be kind
To bless you wi' a kirk.'

STANZA III. LINE 1. 'But if the lover's *mystic* hour,' MS.
2. 'Should ever be your lot,' MS.

STANZA IV. LINE 1. 'And when a kind connubial dear,' MS.
2. 'Your but-an-ben':—See *ante*, p. 334, Note to *The Holy Fair*, STANZA XVIII. LINE 1.

STANZA V. LINE 1. 'And to *conclude*, most reverend James,' MS.

STANZA VI. LINE 2. 'Beneath a grassy hillock,' MS.

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID

STANZA I. LINE 7. 'The *heaped* happer's ebbing still,' 1787 (1).

STANZA V. LINE 1. 'See *Social Life* and Glee sit down,' 1787 (2).

STANZA VI. LINE 8. 'Ye're *ablins* nae temptation,' 1787 (2).

STANZA VII. LINE 3. 'Tho' they may gang *a-kennin* wrang,' 1787 (2):—'A-kennin' means a 'very little'; merely as much as can be perceived or known.

TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY

'WHEN this worthy old sportsman went out last muir-fowl season, he supposed it was to be, in Ossian's phrase, "the last of his fields," and expressed an ardent wish to die and be buried in the muirs. On this hint the author composed his *Elegy and Epitaph*' (R. B.). Samson—a nursery-gardener and seedsman in Kilmarnock, and an ardent sportsman—died 12th December 1796, in his seventy-third year. The *Epitaph* is inscribed on his tombstone in the

yard of the Laigh Kirk, adjoining those of the two ministers, Mackinlay and Robertson, mentioned in the first stanza. The piece is modelled—even to the use of certain lines—on Sempill's *Piper of Kilbarchan*. See *ante*, p. 345, Prefatory Note to *Poor Maihie's Elegy*. On 18th November 1786, shortly before setting out for Edinburgh, Burns wrote to his friend Robert Muir: 'Inclosed you have *Tam Samson*, as I intend to print him.' TAM
SAMSON'S
ELEGY

STANZA I. LINE 2. 'Or great Mackinlay thrawn his heel':—'A certain preacher, a great favourite with the million. Vide *The Ordination*, STANZA II.' (R. B.). 3. 'Or Robertson again grown weel':—'Another preacher, an equal favourite with the *few*, who was at that time ailing. For him see also *The Ordination*, STANZA IX.' (R. B.). 4. 'To preach an' read':—The orthodox party strongly objected to a 'read' sermon.

STANZA II. LINE I. 'Kilmarnock lang may grunt an' *grain*,' 1787 (2). 2. 'An' sigh, an' *sob*, an' greet her lane,' 1787 (1), and 1793.

STANZA III. LINE I. 'The Brethren *of* the mystic level,' 1794.

STANZA IV. LINE 4. 'Wi' gleesome *spied*,' 1787 (1), and 1787 (2).

STANZA V. LINE I. 'He was the king *o'* a' the core,' 1787 (2), and 1794. 2. 'To guard, or draw, or wick a bore':—In curling, 'to guard' is to defend a stone in a good position by placing another opposite it; 'to draw' is to send it into a good position, by hitting it with just the right force; and 'to wick a bore' is to hit it obliquely and send it through an opening. 4. 'In time *of* need,' 1794. 5. 'Death's hog-score':—The hog-score is a line, which the curling stone must cross, or go out of play and be removed.

STANZA VI. LINE 3. 'An' eels, weel *ken'd* for souple tail,' 1794.

STANZA IX. LINE 3. 'In vain the burns *came* down like waters,' 1793 and 1794. 4. 'An acre-*bread*,' 1793.

STANZA X. LINE 3. 'Till coward Death *behind* him jumpit,' 1787 (1), 1793, and 1794.

TAM STANZA XII. LINE 3. 'Yon auld gray stane amang the
SAMSON'S *hether*, 1787 (2).

ELEGY STANZA XIII. was added in 1793. LINE 4. 'To hatch and
breed,' 1794.

STANZA XIV. LINE 1. 'When August winds the *hether*
wave,' 1787 (2).

STANZA XV. LINE 4. 'Yet what remead?' :—Cf. *The
Apocrypha*, Wisd. ii. 1 :—'In the death of a man there is no
remedy'; and Sempill, *The Piper of Kilbarchan*, STANZA 1.
LINE 4.

PER CONTRA. LINE 2. 'Thro' a' the streets an' neuks o'
Killie':—'Killie is a phrase the country-folks sometimes use for
the name of a certain town in the west' (R. B.).

A WINTER NIGHT

PROBABLY the piece which Burns sent to John Ballantine
on 20th November 1786 :— 'Enclosed you have my first
attempt in that irregular kind of measure in which many
of our finest odes are wrote. How far I have succeeded
I don't know, but I shall be happy to have your opinion
on Friday first (24th November), when I intend being in
Ayr.' The irregular strophes—imitated from Gray, and
strikingly inferior to the introductory stanzas—are freely
paraphrased from Shakespeare's *Blow, Blow, thou Winter
Wind in As You Like It*.

STANZAS WRITTEN IN PROSPECT OF DEATH

IN the Edinburgh Editions these *Stanzas* follow the
Prayer in Prospect of Death, and are entitled *Stanzas
on the Same Occasion*. They were entered in the *First
Common Place Book*—MS. (A)—in August 1784, under
the title, *Misgivings in the Hour of Despondency and
Prospect of Death*; and were also inserted in the *Second
Common Place Book* under the title, *Stanzas on the Same
Occasion in the manner of Beattie's Minstrel*. This MS.—
MS. (B)—torn from the *Second Common Place Book*, now
in the possession of Mr. Alexander Macmillan, London,

is in the Burns Monument, Edinburgh. The poem, under the title, *Reflections on a Sickbed*—ms. (C)—was inscribed by Burns on a flyleaf of the copy of the '86 Edition now in the British Museum. Another copy—ms. (D)—entitled *Misgivings of Despondency on the Approach of the Gloomy Monarch of the Grave*, and forming part of the now dismembered Stair manuscript, is in the possession of Mr. William Nelson, Edinburgh.

For the stave, see *ante*, p. 362, Prefatory Note to *The Cotter's Saturday Night*.

STANZA I. LINE 4. 'Some gleams of sunshine *midst* renewing storms,' MSS. (A and B). 5. 'Is it departing pangs my heart alarms?' MS. (A).

STANZA II. LINE 4. 'Again I *would* desert fair Virtue's way,' all MSS. 5. 'Again *to passions* I *would* fall a prey,' MS. (A); 'Again *with passions* would be led astray,' MS. (B); 'Again *by passion* would be led astray,' MSS. (C and D). 7. 'Then how *can* I for heavenly mercy pray,' all MSS. 9. 'Who sin so oft have mourn'd, *then* to temptation ran,' MS. (A).

STANZA III. LINE 2. 'If *one so black with crimes* dare call on thee,' all MSS. 3. 'Thy *breath* can make the tempest cease to blow,' MS. (A). 4. 'And still the tumult of the raging sea,' MSS. (A and C). 6. 'Those *rapid headlong* passions to confine,' MS. (C). 7. 'For all unfit *my native powers* be,' all MSS.; 'I feel my *powers* be,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2), and 1793.

PRAYER: O THOU DREAD POWER

'The first time ever Robert heard the spinnet played was at the house of Dr. Lawrie, then minister of Loudoun. . . . Dr. Lawrie (has) several daughters; one of them played; the father and mother led down the dance; the rest of the sisters, the brother, the poet, and the other guests mixed in it. It was a delightful family scene for our poet, then lately introduced to the world. His mind was roused to a poetic enthusiasm, and the

O THOU stanzas were left in the room where he slept':—Gilbert
DREAD Burns. Robert wrote to the son on 13th November
POWER 1786:—'A poet's warmest wishes for their happiness to
 the young ladies, particularly the fair musician, whom I
 think much better qualified than ever David was, or
 could be, to charm an evil spirit out of Saul. Indeed,
 it needs not the feelings of the poet to be interested in
 the welfare of one of the sweetest scenes of domestic
 peace and kindred love that ever I saw; as I think
 the peaceful unity of St. Margaret's Hill can only be
 excelled by the harmonious concord of the Apocalyptic
 Zion.' When he paid this visit his chest 'was on the road
 to Greenock'; and but for the fact that Lawrie showed
 him Dr. Blacklock's letter, strongly recommending a
 second edition of his poems, he would have sailed in a
 few days for Jamaica.

PARAPHRASE OF THE FIRST PSALM

THIS is probably an early composition, and dates from
 about the same time as the next piece.

A PRAYER UNDER THE PRESSURE OF VIOLENT ANGUISH

INSCRIBED in the *First Common Place Book*—MS. (B)—
 and thus prefaced:—'There was a certain period of
 life that my spirit was broke by repeated losses and dis-
 asters, which threatened, and indeed effected, the utter
 ruin of my future. My body, too, was attacked by that
 most dreadful distemper, a Hypochondria, or confirmed
 melancholy: in this wretched state, the recollection of
 which makes me yet shudder, I hung my harp on the
 willow trees except in some lucid intervals, in one of
 which I composed the following.' It was probably written
 about the close of Burns's residence in Irvine in 1782, and,

under the title, *Prayer under the Pressure of Bitter Anguish*, is inscribed—in an early hand—at the end of a copy of Fergusson's *Poems*, published that year, now in the possession of the Earl of Rosebery—MS. (A). PRAYER
UNDER
VIOLENT
ANGUISH

STANZA I. LINE 2. '*Surpassest* me to know,' MS. (B). 4.
'Are all *affairs* below,' MSS. (A and B).

STANZA II. LINE 3. 'Yet sure those ills that *press* my soul,' MS. (B).

STANZA III. LINE I. 'Sure thou, *all Perfect*, canst not act,' MS. (B).

STANZA IV. LINE 3. '*O* ! man my soul with firm resolves,' MSS. (A and B).

THE NINETIETH PSALM VERSIFIED

PROBABLY dating from the same period as the two last. An early MS. is in the Burns Monument, Edinburgh.

STANZA II. LINE 3. 'Before this *mighty* globe itself,' MS.

STANZA V. LINE 2. '*Is into being* brought,' deleted reading in MS.

STANZA VI. LINE I. 'Thou layest them *and* all their cares,' MS. 2. 'In *never ending* sleep,' MS.

TO MISS LOGAN

THE Miss Logan of these verses was the 'sentimental sister Susie' of the *Epistle to Major Logan* (vol. ii.). It is probable that Burns, when he last met her, had promised her a New Year's gift from Jamaica ; but, his prospects changing, he sent her Beattie's volumes instead.

ADDRESS TO A HAGGIS

Hogg states that this spirited extravaganza was 'written in the house of Mr. Andrew Bruce, Castlehill, Edinburgh, where a haggis one day made part of the dinner'; but

ADDRESS it is unlikely that Burns set to work on it there and then.
TO A Chambers's story, that the germ was the last stanza (as
HAGGIS first printed) extemporised as grace at a friend's house, is
 seemingly a variation of the same legend. *The Address*—
 ('never before published')—appeared in *The Caledonian*
Mercury on 19th December 1786, and in *The Scots Maga-*
zine for January 1787.

STANZA I. LINE 5. 'Weel are ye wordy o' a grace,' *Caledonian Mercury* and 1787 (2).

STANZA VI. LINE 2. 'As seckless as a' wither'd rash,' 1787 (2).

STANZA VIII. LINE 3. 'Auld Scotland wants nae stinking ware,' 1787 (2):—See *ante*, Bibliographical, p. 313.

STANZA VIII., as printed in *The Caledonian Mercury* and *The Scots Magazine*, reads thus:—

'Ye Powers wha gie us a' that's gude,
 Still bless auld Caledonia's brood
 Wi' great John Barleycorn's heart's blude
 In stoups or luggies;
 And on our board that king o' food,
 A glorious Haggice.'

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH

THIS poem and another were enclosed in a letter from Edinburgh, 27th December 1786, to William Chalmers, in which Burns stated that he 'had carded and spun them' since he 'passed Glenbuck' [the last Ayrshire hamlet on his way to Edinburgh]. A MS.—MS. (A)—is in the possession of Mr. Robert Clarke, Cincinnati, U.S.A., who has sent us a copy. Another MS., given by the poet to Lady Don—MS. (B)—is in the University of Edinburgh; and the Library Committee have kindly permitted us to produce it in *facsimile*.

For the stave, see *ante*, p. 371, Prefatory Note to *The Lament*.

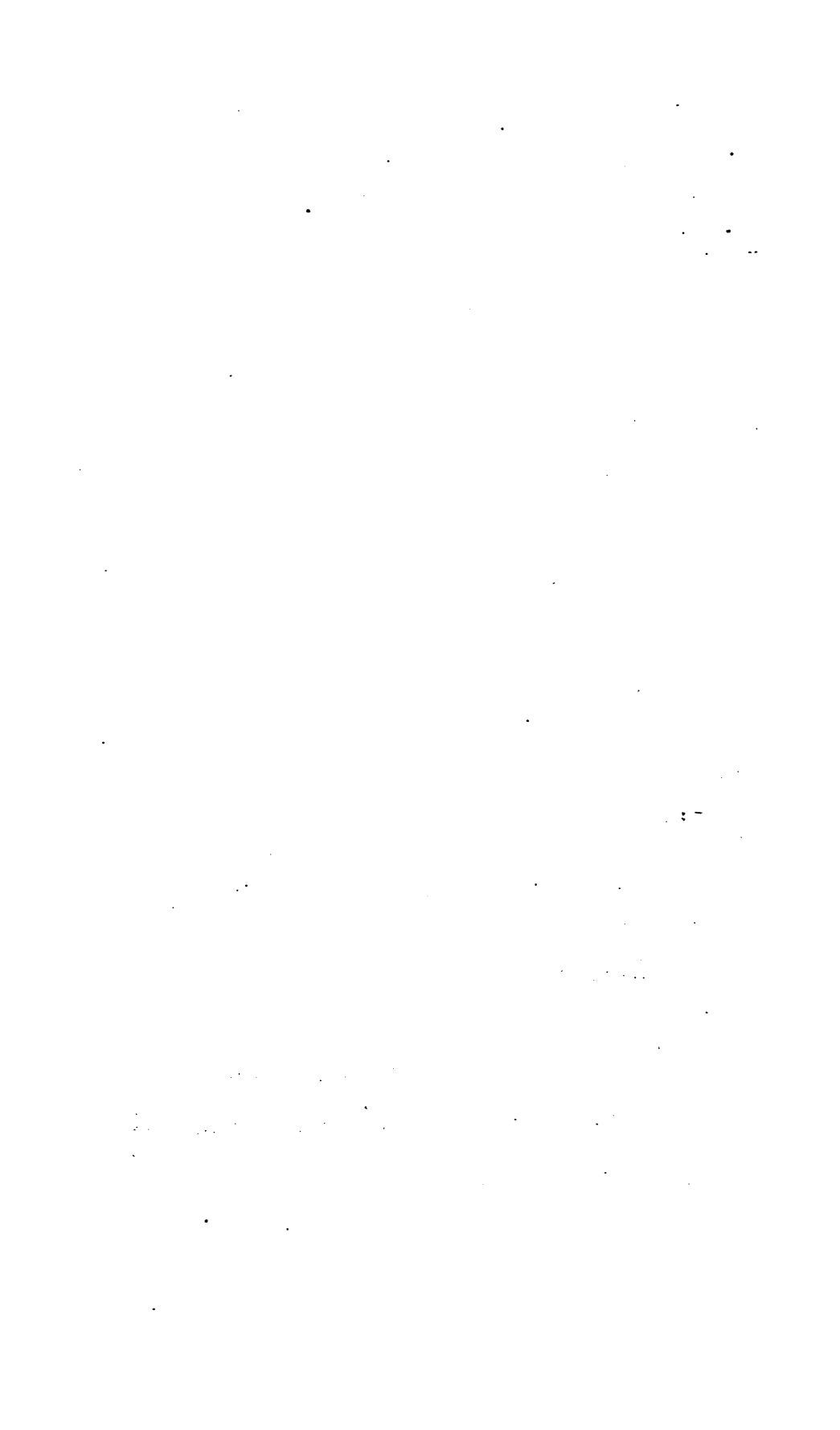
STANZA I. LINE 5. 'From gathering wildly-scatt' red flowers,'

Address to Edinburgh

Edina, Scotia's darling seat,
All had thy palaces and towers,
Where once, beneath a Monarch's feet,
Vate Legislation's foreign flow'rs!
From gathering wildly-scatt'ed flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ilk I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the long'ning hours,
I shelter in your honor's shade.

Here wealth flows swells the golden tide,
As busy Trade his labors plies;
There Architecture's noble pride
Pride Elegance and Splendor rises:
Here Justice, from her native skies,
High wields her balance and her rod;
There Learning with his eagle eyes
Checks Vice in her coy abode.





O Thy Woes, tedious, social, kind,
With open arms the Strangers hail;
Thy eyes enlarge, their liberal mind,
Above the narrow, rural vale;
Attentive still to Pity's wail,
By modest Merit's silent claim;
And never may their sources fail.
And never envy blot their name.

O Thy Daughters bright thy walks adorn,
Gay as the gilded Hammer fly,
Sweet as the dewy, milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptur'd thrill of joy;
Fair Be — flutters th' adoring eye,
Heaven's beauties on my Fancy shine,
I see the Voice of Love on high,
And own his work indeed divine.

There, watching high the hapt alarms,
O Thy rough, rude Twilight glooms afar,

Like some bold Sel-ran, grey on a mane,
And mark'd with many a gleaming scar;
The pond'rous wall, and massive bar,
Lying-ripping o'er the rugged rock;
'T has it stood a sailing war,
And oft rebell'd th' Invader's flock.

With awe-struck thought, and pitying tears,
I view that noble, stately Dome,
Whose Spain's kings of other years
Pam'd & Honor, had their royal home:
Alas! how chang'd the times to come,
O their royal name low in the dust,
O their hapless Race, wild-wandering roam,
O though rigid Death cries out: 'twas just.

My heart beats wild to trace your steps,
Those ancestors, in days of yore,
Through hostile ranks and ruin'd gaps
Old Scotia's bloody Lion bore!



Erin, who sing with rustic lore,
Hark! my Sires have left their shed,
And bid' gain Danger's lowliest road,
Bold following where your Father's led.

Odina, Scotia's darling feat,
All hail, thy palaces and towers,
Where once, beneath a monarch's feet,
Sat Legislation's foreign powers.
From gathering wildly-feathered fowls,
As on the banks of Alpheus stray'd,
And singing, lone, the long-sung hours,
I shelter in your honours shade.

Burns

Address to
Erin

and to Erin
at Burn
1794

MS. (B). 8. 'I shelter in *your* honour'd shade,' deleted reading in MS. (A). ADDRESS TO

STANZA II. LINE 1. 'Here wealth *slow-swells* the golden tide,' MSS. (A and B). EDINBURGH

STANZA III. LINE 4. 'Above the narrow *rustic* vale,' MS. (A). 5. 'Attentive still to *pity's* wail,' MS. (B), and deleted reading in MS. (A).

STANZA IV. LINE 4. 'Fair Burnet strikes th' adoring eye':—See *Elegy on the late Miss Burnet of Monboddoo*, vol. ii.

STANZA V. LINE 7. '*Oft has it stood* assailing war,' MSS. (A and B); '*Have oft withstood*,' as printed, being deleted in MS. (A).

STANZA VI. LINE 8. '*Though rigid truth* cries out, "'twas just,"' MSS. (A and B), '*law*' being deleted in MS. (A).

STANZA VII. LINE 1. '*My heart beats wild* to trace your steps,' MSS. (A and B); '*meet*,' deleted reading for '*trace*' in MS. (A). 5. 'Ev'n I who sing *with* rustic lore,' MSS. (A and B).

STANZA VIII. LINE 5. 'From *gathering* wildly-scatt'ed flowers,' MS. (B). 8. 'I shelter in *your* honor'd shade,' MSS. (A and B).

SONGS

JOHN BARLEYCORN

ENTERED in the *First Common Place Book* under date June 1785, with the title, *John Barleycorn—A Song to its own Tune*. Burns prefaces it with the remark that he had once heard the old song that goes by this name; and that he remembered only the three first verses and 'some scraps' which he had 'interwoven here and there in the piece.' In the '87 Edition he inserted a note: 'This is partly composed on the plan of an old song known by the same name.' In view of these statements, special interest attaches to a set printed in Laing's *Early Metrical Tales* (1826) from a stall copy of 1781,

JOHN BARLEY-CORN with a few corrections on the authority of two others of later date. Here are the three first stanzas :—

' There came three merry men from the east,
And three merry men were they,
And they did swear a solemn oath
That Sir John Barleycorn they would slay.

They took a plough, and plough'd him down,
And laid cloods upon his head;
And then they swore a solemn oath,
That Sir John Barleycorn was dead.

' But the spring-time it came on amain,
And rain towards the earth did fall:
John Barleycorn sprung up again,
And so subdued them all.'

Robert Jamieson prints a set in his *Popular Ballads and Songs* (1806) as he heard it in Moray when a boy. In its first three verses it closely resembles the Burns; but Burns's poems were in circulation before Jamieson's boyhood was over, and may have influenced his memory. He prints another set from a black-letter copy in the Pepys' Library, Cambridge, as well as sets of the analogous *Allan-a-Maut* ballad, including that in *The Bannatyne MS.* There is, further, a curious chap (1757) which is not included in Jamieson. The ungrammatical '*was*' in Burns's first line was probably suggested by 'There was three ladies in a ha', in Herd's *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs* (1776).

STANZA I. LINE 4. 'That John Barleycorn should die,' MS.

STANZA II. LINE I. 'They've taen a plough and plough'd him down,' MS. 3. 'And they have sworn a solemn oath,' MS. 4. 'That John Barleycorn was dead,' MS.

STANZA III. LINE I. 'But the spring-time it came on,' MS.

STANZA IV. LINE I. 'The summer it came on,' MS. 3. 'His head well arm'd with pointed spears,' MS.

STANZA V. In the MS. LINES 1-2 read thus :—

'The Autumn it came on
And he grew wan and pale.'

STANZA VII. In the MS. LINES 1-2 read thus :—

' *They took a hook was long and sharp
And cut him down at knee.*

JOHN
BARLEY-
CORN

STANZA X. LINE 1. '*They 've thrown* him out upon the floor,' MS.

STANZA XI. LINE 3. '*But the miller used him worst of all,*' MS.

STANZA XII. LINE 1. '*And they have ta'en his very heart's blood,*' MS.

STANZA XIV. LINE 2. '*And heighten all his joy,*' MS.

A FRAGMENT : WHEN GUILFORD GOOD

THIS was probably the 'political ballad' which Burns enclosed to Henry Erskine—on the advice of Glencairn—for his opinion as to whether he should or should not publish it. The work of some nameless Loyalist, the old song on which it is moulded is printed in David Laing's *Various Pieces of Fugitive Scottish Poetry*, First Series (1826), which dates it 1689, under the title, *Killychrankie* [the battle was fought in that year], 'To be Sung to its Own Tune':—

' *Claverse and his Highland men
Came down upon a Raw, then,
Who, being stout, gave many a Clout,
The Lads began to claw then* ';

and so on for eight mortal octaves. The same volume sets forth an *Answer* to the same tune in as many more. An old (undated and unplaced) chap in a collection formed by Motherwell consists of—(1) *An Excellent New Song Intituled The Proceedings of the Rebels in the year (sic) Forty-five, Six, with the Total Overthrow of the Rebel Army by His Royal Highness and his brave Army at Oulldoden, near Inverness* : 'To its Own Proper Tune'; and (2) *The Answer*. The metrical scheme of the *Excellent New Song*, which is in thirteen stanzas, is precisely that of *Killychrankie*. *The Answer* (in praise of Cumberland) runs a pace of its

WHEN own. Yet another set, but weighted with a chorus, is
 GUILFORD *The Marquis of Huntley's Retreat from the Battle of*
 GOOD *Sheriffmuir* :—

' From Bogie side to Bogie Gight,
 The Gordons all convened, man,
 With all their might, to battle weight (*sic*),
 Together closs they joined, man ' :—

reprinted, in Motherwell's *New Book of Old Ballads* (Edinburgh, 1844), 'from the original broadside, supposed to be unique, belonging to Mr. David Haig of the Advocates' Library.' See *The Battle of Sherramuir*, Vol. iii.

For the privilege of inspecting a holograph copy we are indebted to Mr. Davey, Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, London. It coincides with the printed version, except that the last stanza is wanting, and that in Stanza v. occurs the following deleted reading of lines 3 and 4 :—

' And bauld G—ne whom Minden's plain
 To fame will ever blaw, man ' ;

the present reading being inserted in the margin. The ballad was printed both in Johnson's *Museum*, ii. 102 (1788), and in Thomson's *Scottish Airs*, iii. 125.

MY NANIE, O

PERHAPS suggested by a poor thing of Ramsay's :—

' While some for pleasure pawn their health
 'Twixt Lais and the bagnio,
 I'll save myself, and without stealth
 Kiss and caress my Nanny, O.'

In Hogg and Motherwell's Edition another version—oral: communicated by Peter Buchan, is printed; it begins, 'As I gaed down thro' Embro' town.' In the *First Common Place Book*—ms. (A)—where it appears under date of April 1784, it is headed *Song (Tune, 'As I came in by London O')*. It is thus prefaced :—'As I have been all along a miserable dupe to Love, and have been led into a thousand

weaknesses and follies by it, for that reason I put the more confidence in my critical skill in distinguishing foppery and conceit from real passion and nature. Whether the following song will stand the test, I will not pretend to say, because it is my own; only I can say it was, at the time, real.' MY NANIE, O

According to Gilbert Burns, the heroine was Agnes Fleming. She was daughter of John Fleming, farmer at Doura, in the parish of Tarbolton. On the other hand, Mrs. Begg asserts that it was written in honour of Peggy Thomson of Kirkoswald (see *ante*, p. 387, Prefatory Note to *Composed in August*), while Hamilton Paul champions the charms of a Kilmarnock girl. It was published in Johnson's *Museum*, vi. 600 (1803), and Thomson's *Scottish Airs*, i. 4. A second set has been attributed to Burns. See Vol. iv.

A MS.—MS. (B)—in the possession of Mr. Adam Wood, Troon, and probably belonging to the Stair manuscript, contains the two songs *My Nanie, O* and *Once I Lov'd a Bonie Lass*, with the preface:—'The following songs were all done at a very early period of my life and consequently are incorrect.' In a postscript—dated Saturday morning—to his letter to Thomson of 26th October 1792, Burns wrote:—'I find that I have still an hour to spare this morning before my conveyance goes away: I shall give you "Nannie O" at length.' Notwithstanding Scott Douglas's assertion to the contrary, this copy—MS. (C)—is in the volume of *Thomson's Correspondence* in Brechin Castle.

STANZA I. LINE I. 'Behind yon hills where *Stinchar* flows,' MSS. (A and B), and all the Author's Editions; 'where *rivulets* flow,' Johnson's *Museum*. Writing to Thomson, 20th October 1792, Burns says:—'In the printed copy of *My Nanie, O*, the name of the river is horribly prosaic. I will alter it:—

'Behind yon hills where { Girvan flows.
Lugar

'Girvan' is the river that suits the idea of the stanza best; but

MY 'Lugar' is the most agreeable modulation of syllables. In NANIE, O MS. (C) Burns gave Thomson the choice of four streams :—

'Behind yon hills where {
Afton
Lugar
Girvan
Stinziar } flows,'

and Thomson drew his pen through the uppermost and the two lowermost names. Burns retained '*Stinchar*' in the '93 and the '94 Editions :—a fact which seems to make for the Kirkoswald theory. 2. '*Are moors an' mosses mony, O,*' Johnson's *Museum*. 3. '*The weary sun the day has closed,*' MS. (A); '*The sun the wintry day has clos'd,*' MS. (B) and Johnson's *Museum*. At the end of STANZA I. the following chorus—a mere variation of Ramsay's, which was probably borrowed from an older song—occurs in MS. (A) :—

'And O my bonnie Nanie, O,
My young, my handsome Nanie, O,
Tho' I had the world all at my will,
I would give it all for Nanie, O.'

STANZA II. LINE 1. '*Tho'* westlin wind blows loud *and shill,*' Thomson, but MS. (C) shows the alteration in Thomson's own hand. 2. '*The night's baith dark and rainy O,*' MSS. (A and B); '*And its baith mirk,*' *etc.*, Thomson's unauthorised alteration in MS. (C). 4. '*And o'er the hill to Nanie O,*' MS. (A).

STANZA IV. LINE 3. '*The op'ning gowan wet wi' dew,*' MSS. (A and B).

STANZA VI. LINE 4. '*My thoughts are a' about Nanie, O,*' MS. (A).

STANZA VII. LINE 1. '*Our guidman delights to view,*' MSS. (A and B) and Johnson's *Museum*. 2. '*His sheep and his ky thrive bonny, O,*' MS. (A). 4. '*And hae nae care but Nanie, O,*' MS. (A).

STANZA IX. After this stanza the chorus is repeated in MS. (A), '*to*' being substituted for '*for*' in LINE 4.

GREEN GROW THE RASHES, O

THIS little masterpiece of wit and gaiety and movement was suggested either by the fragment, *Green Grow the*

Rashes, O in Herd's *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs*, or by the blackguard old song itself. Herd gives only three stanzas, of which the first is:—

GREEN
GROW
THE
RASHES

'Green grows the rashes—O
Green grows the rashes—O
The feather-bed is no sae saft
As a bed among the rashes.'

But the song (or what is left of it) is given in the unique and interesting garland called *The Merry Muses of Caledonia* (c. 1800), probably—almost certainly—collected by Burns for his private use, together with a second and still grosser set attributed, rightly or wrongly, to Burns himself. Another set in *The Factor's Garland, etc.*, an old Falkirk chap (undated), also in the Motherwell Collection, begins thus:—

'My Jocky blyth, for what thou'st done
There's nae help for mending;
For thou hast jog'd me out of tune,
For a' thy fair pretending.
My mither sees a change on me,
For my complexion daashes,
And this, alas! has been (*sic*) with thee
Sae late among the rashes.'

A song, *Cow Thou me the Raschis Greene*, mentioned in the *Complaint of Scotland*, may have been a Scots set of *Colle to me the Ryshes Greene*, printed from a ms. of the time of Henry VI. in Ritson's *Ancient Songs* (1790). The original allusion was to the old-world material for a couch.

Entered by Burns in the *First Common Place Book*, under date August 1786, the piece is preceded by a dissertation on young men, who are divided into 'two grand classes—the grave and the merry,' and by the remark:—
'It will enable any body to determine which of the classes I belong to.' It was published in Johnson's *Museum*, i. 77. Thomson proposed to set it to *Cauld Kail in Aberdeen*; but Burns declared that it would 'never suit' that air.

CHORUS. LINE 3. 'The sweetest hours that e'er I spent,'

GREEN 1793 and 1794, but as it is ungrammatical in view of the 'me'
 GROW of LINE 4, it is probably a printer's error, the more especially
 THE that 'spend' is the reading in the MS., in 1787 (1), and 1787 (2),
 RASHES and in Johnson's *Museum*.

STANZA IV. LINE 1. 'For you *that's* douce an' sneers at this,'
 MS. 2. 'The wisest man the warl' saw,' 1787 (1), 1787 (2),
 1793 and 1794.

STANZA V. was probably written in Edinburgh, as it does not
 appear in the *First Common Place Book*.

AGAIN REJOICING NATURE

BURNS explains that the chorus is 'part of a song composed by a gentleman in Edinburgh, a particular friend of the author's'; and that 'Menie' is the 'common abbreviation of Marianne.' In all likelihood the song was composed after the rupture with Jean Armour, and the chorus added in Edinburgh by Burns himself.

THE GLOOMY NIGHT IS GATHERING FAST

IN an interleaved copy of Johnson's *Museum* Burns inscribed the following note:—'I composed this song as I conveyed my chest so far on the road to Greenock, where I was to embark in a few days for Jamaica. I meant it as my farewell dirge to my native land.' In his Autobiographic Letter to Dr. Moore, 'I had composed,' he says, 'a song, *The Gloomy Night is Gathering Fast*, which was to be the last effort of my muse in Caledonia, when a letter from Dr. Blacklock to a friend of mine overthrew all my schemes.' Professor Walker, on R. B.'s authority, affirms that he composed it on the way home from Dr. Lawrie's; but, as it was to Dr. Lawrie that Blacklock wrote, we must infer that Walker was so far mistaken, and that the verses were made on the way thither.

Burns gives *Roslin Castle* as the tune to which this passionate lyric should be sung. His use of a refrain,

however, suggests that the true model was *The Birks of Invermay*. It was published in Johnson, iii. 293 (1790). GLOOMY NIGHT IS

A holograph, forming part of the dismembered Stair ms. —ms. (A)—was before Hatley Waddell, and it is also inscribed in a copy of the '86 Edition—ms. (B)—in the possession of Lord Blythwood, who permitted us to inspect it. GATHER-ING FAST

STANZA II. Lines 5-6 in ms. (A) read thus :—

‘*The whistling wind affrightens me,
I think upon the raging sea.*’

ms. (B) has the same reading, with ‘*storm*’ for ‘*wind*.’

STANZA III. LINE 7. ‘*Those bleed afresh, these ties I tear,*’

mss. (A and B).

STANZA IV. LINE 6. ‘*My love with these, my peace with those,*’ mss. (A and B).

NO CHURCHMAN AM I

THIS poor performance, written probably in 1781 or 1782 for the Tarbolton Bachelors’ Club, in imitation of a popular type of English drinking song, appears to have been suggested and inspired by a far better piece, *The Women all Tell Me I’m False to My Lass* (c. 1740 : still to be heard as *Wine, Mighty Wine*), the air of which may well have been in Burns’s ear when he directed his own words to be sung to the tune of *Prepare, my Dear Brethren*. It is quoted, according to Mr. Baring Gould (*English Minstrelsie*, 1895, I. xxiii.), in *The Bulfinch* (1746), *The Wreath* (1763), and *The Occasional Songster* (1782); and we have found it, as Burns before us, in *A Select Collection of English Songs* (London, 1763)—an odd volume of which, containing this very lyric, with notes in his handwriting, is before us as we write—and in *Calliope* (Edinburgh, 1788). Here is a stanza which must certainly have been present when he was struggling with the halting lines and the second-rate buckishness of *No Churchman Am I* :—

NO
CHURCH-
MAN AM I

'She too might have poisoned the joy of my life
With nurses, and babies, and squalling, and strife;
But my wine neither nurses nor babies can bring,
And a big-bellied bottle's a mighty good thing.'

The anapest with four accents has carried a bacchanalian connotation from the time of Shadwell's *Psyche* (1672) at least, and the present stave has been the vehicle of innumerable drinking songs, including the English *A Tankard of Ale*, and the Irish *One Bottle More*. Burns himself reverts to it in *The Whistle* (see *post*, p. 454).

STANZA VI. LINE 1. "Life's cares they are comforts"—a maxim laid down:—'Young's *Night Thoughts*,' (R. B.). 3. 'And faith I agree with *the* old prig to a hair,' 1793.

STANZA VII. LINE 4. 'Have a big-bellied bottle when *pressed* with care,' 1787 (1) and 1787 (2).

ADDED IN 1793

WRITTEN IN FRIARS CARSE HERMITAGE

THIS is the second version of a piece originally inscribed on a window-pane of Friars Carse Hermitage in June 1788 (see vol. ii.). Friars Carse adjoined Ellisland, and the owner, Captain Robert Riddell of Glenriddell, had given Burns a key to the grounds and the little hermitage which he had built there. It would appear from an undated letter to William Dunbar (asking him to decide between the two sets), and from the fact that Burns distributed copies of both, that he was by no means convinced of the superiority of the second set. Moreover, not merely do mss. of that set show a great many variations, but also—what is unusual with this poet—they indicate a real diversity of opinion. Our tale of variations includes those occurring in—(1) the *Second Common Place Book*—ms. (A); (2) a ms. in the University Library, Edinburgh—ms. (B); (3) the *Glenriddell Book* at Liverpool—ms. (C); (4) the *Afton Lodge*

Book at Alloway—ms. (D); (5) a ms. in the possession of Mr. Lennox, Dumfries—ms. (E); (6) another in the possession of Miss Gladstone of Fasque—ms. (F); (7) the ms. sent to William Dunbar—ms. (G)—for a copy of which we are indebted to Mr. Davey, Great Russell Street, London; (8) a dateless printed copy, published some time before the issue of the '93 Edition; and (9) a copy in *The Glasgow Weekly Miscellany* for 31st November 1791, which was reprinted in other periodicals.

FRIARS
CARSE
HERMIT-
AGE

After LINE 6 the following two lines are inserted in MSS. (A, B, C, F and G) the printed copy and periodicals:—

'Day, how rapid in its flight,
Day, how few must see the night.'

7. 'Hope not sunshine *every* hour,' 1793. 9. 'When youth and love with sprightly dance,' MSS. (D, E and G) and periodicals. 10. 'Beneath thy morning *sun* advance,' MSS. (F and G) and deleted in MS. (A). 14. 'Then *raptured* sip and sip it up,' 1793. 19. 'Check thy climbing *steps* elate,' MS. (A). 25. 'As *thy* shades of ev'ning close,' MSS. (C and D), and 1793, with '*evening*' for 'ev'ning'; 'When *thy*,' MS. (F), printed copy, and periodicals; 'When the,' MS. (E). 31. 'And teach the sportive *younker's brain*,' MS. (A); '*younker-train*,' MS. (C). In MS. (A) the reading adopted in the Author's Editions is deleted. 32. '*Experience* *love oft bought with pain*,' MSS. (A and C). In MS. (A) the reading adopted in the Author's Editions is deleted. 33. 'Say *the criterion of their fate*,' deleted reading in MS. (A), but adopted in MSS. (B and F), the printed copy, and the periodicals. 34. 'The *important query of their fate*,' MS. (A); '*state*,' deleted in MS. (A), but adopted in MSS. (B and F), the printed copy, and the periodicals; 'The grand criterion of *their fate*,' MS. (C). 37. '*Wert thou cottager or king*,' MSS. (B and F), the printed copy, and the periodicals, but deleted in MS. (A). 38. '*Peer or Peasant—no such thing*,' MS. (B and F), the printed copy, and the periodicals, but deleted in MS. (A). 39. 'Tell *them—press* it on the mind,' printed copy and the periodicals. 55. 'Quod the Beadsman *on Nidside*,' or '*on Nithside*,' MSS.—'Quod,' the old Scots form of 'Quoth,' was usually attached by the 'Makaris' to their pieces.

ODE SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
MRS. OSWALD

IN a letter to Dr. Moore, 23rd March 1789, enclosing this *Ode*, Burns explains its origin:—‘In January last, on my road to Ayrshire, I had put up at Bailie Whigham’s in Sanquhar, the only tolerable inn in the place. The frost was keen, and the grim evening and howling wind were ushering in a night of snow and drift. My horse and I were both much fatigued with the labors of the day, and just as my friend the Bailie and I were bidding defiance to the storm, over a smoking bowl, in wheels the funeral pageantry of the late great Mrs. Oswald; and poor I am forced to brave all the horrors of a tempestuous night, and jade my horse, my young favourite horse, whom I had just christened Pegasus, twelve miles further on, through the wildest moors and hills of Ayrshire, to New Cumnock, the next inn. The powers of poesy and prose sink under me, when I would describe what I felt. Suffice it to say, that when a good fire at New Cumnock had so far recovered my frozen sinews, I sat down and wrote the inclosed ode.’ In a letter (unpublished) to Mrs. Dunlop, enclosing the copy of the *Ode*, ‘Before I reached the other stage,’ he writes, ‘I had composed the following, and sent it off at the first post office for the *Courant*,’ by which, if this be true, it was declined. On May 7th, 1789, the piece appeared in *Stuart’s Star* with the following preface, here for the first time reprinted:—

‘Mr. Printer,

‘I know not who is the author of the following poem, but I think it contains some equally well-told and just compliments to the memory of a matron who, a few months ago, much against her private inclination, left this good world and twice five good thousands per annum behind her.

‘We are told by very respectable authority that “the

righteous die and none regardeth"; but as this was by no means the case in point with the departed beldam, for whose memory I have the honour to interest myself, it is not easy guessing why prose and verse have both said so little on the death of the owner of ten thousand a year.

ODE
TO THE
MEMORY
OF MRS.
OSWALD

'I dislike partial respect of persons, and am hurt to see the public make such a fuss when a poor pennyless gipsy is consigned over to Jack Ketch, and yet scarce take any notice when a purse-proud Priestess of Mammon is by the memorable hand of death prisoned in everlasting fetters of ill-gotten gold, and delivered up to the arch-brother among the finishers of the law, emphatically called by your bard, the hangman of creation.

'TIM NETTLE.'

The same issue contained a letter signed with Burns's own initials, which has never been republished. It is of some interest as regards his newspaper work:—

'Mr. Printer,

'Your goodness oppresses me:—"Talbot's death was woe enough though it had ended there."

'Your polite exculpation of me in your paper was enough. The paper itself is more than I can in decency accept of, as I can do little or nothing on my part to requite the obligation. For this reason I am to be at liberty to resign your favour at pleasure, without any imputation of little pride or pettish humour.

'I have had my usual luck in receiving your paper. They have all come to hand except the two which I most wanted, the 17th and 18th, in which I understand my verses are. So it has been with me always. A damned star has almost all my life usurped my zenith, and squinted out the cursed rays of its malign influences. In the strong language of the old Hebrew Seer:—"And behold, whatsoever he purposeth, it shall not come to pass; and whatsoever he doth, it shall not prosper."

'Any alterations you think necessary in my trifles, make them and welcome. In political principles, I pre-

ODE TO THE MEMORY OF MRS. OSWALD
 sume you and I shall be seldom out of the way ; as I would lay down my life for that amiable, gallant, generous fellow, our heir-apparent. Allow me to correct the address you give me. I am not R. B., Esqr. No poet, by statute of Parnassus, has a right as an author to assume Esqr., except he has had the honour to dedicate "by permission" to a Prince, if not a King ; so I am as yet simply Mr. Robert Burns, at your service.

'The preceding are yours, "As you like it." The ode is a compliment I paid to that venerable votary of iron avarice and sordid pride—the late Mrs. O—d of Auch—n, N—A—shire. The epitaph is not mine. [It was Gavin Turnbull's.]

'I must beg of you never to put my name to anything I send you except when I myself set it at the head or foot of the piece. I am charmed with your paper. I wish it was more in my power to contribute to it ; but over and above a comfortable stock of laziness of which, or rather by which, I am possessed, the regions of my fancy are dreadfully subject to baleful east winds, which at times for months together wither every bud and blossom, and turn the whole into an arid waste. From which evil Good Lord deliver us. Amen. R. B.'

Mrs. Oswald was the widow of Richard Oswald, second son of Rev. George Oswald, of Dunnet, Caithness. He purchased Auchencruive in 1772. He died at an 'advanced age,' 6th November 1784, and in the obituary notice in *The Scots Magazine* is described as 'an eminent merchant in London, and lately employed at Paris as a commissioner for negotiating a peace with the United States.' From Burns's epithet, 'Plunderer of Armies,' he would appear to have been also an army contractor. In his letter to Dr. Moore, Burns states that he knew that Mrs. Oswald was detested by her tenants and servants 'with the most heartfelt cordiality.' She died 6th December 1788, at her house in Great George Street, Westminster, and when Burns was driven from his inn by her 'funeral

pageantry' the body was on its way to Ayrshire. Burns himself was proceeding in the same direction (as we learn from a letter to Mrs. Dunlop of 18th December) to the Ayr Fair, held about the 12th January.

There are manuscripts of the ode at Lochryan—*ms.* (A); Edinburgh University—*ms.* (B); Liverpool—*ms.* (C); and Dalmeny—*ms.* (D); and the copy as sent to *The Star* corresponds, except as regards small points in spelling, with the text of Editions '93 and '94.

ODE
TO THE
MEMORY
OF MRS.
OSWALD

STROPHE. After LINE 7 these lines occur in MSS. (A and B):—

'The great despised her and her wealth,
The poor man breathed a curse by stealth.'

ANTISTROPHE. LINE 1. 'Plunderer of Armies':—See Prefatory Note. 2. 'A while forbear, ye *torring* fiends,' 1794. 4. 'No angel *kicked* from upper skies,' MSS. (A, B and C); '*hurled*,' 1793. 6. '*Doomed* to share thy fiery fate,' 1793.

EPODE. LINE 2. 'Ten thousand *glitt'ring* pounds a year,' 1794. 5. 'O bitter *mock'ry* of the pompous bier,' 1794. 7. 'The *cave-lodged* beggar with a conscience clear,' 1793.

ELEGY ON CAPTAIN MATTHEW HENDERSON

MATTHEW HENDERSON was the son of David Henderson, of Tannockside, and Elizabeth Brown; born 24th February 1737; succeeded in early youth to the estates on his father's death; became lieutenant in the Earl of Home's regiment; left the army to hold a government appointment in Edinburgh; was a member of the Poker and other convivial clubs, and a friend of Boswell, who has preserved one or two samples of his wit; died 21st November 1788; and was buried in Greyfriars' Churchyard.

On 23rd July 1790 Burns sent 'a first fair copy' (in the possession of Mr. A. C. Lamb, Dundee), to Robert Cleghorn, Saughton, to whom he stated that Henderson

ELEGY ON was a man he 'much regarded.' On 2nd August he sent
CAPTAIN a copy to John M'Murdo of Drumlanrig:—'You knew
HENDER- Henderson,' he said; 'I have not flattered his memory.'
SON And in enclosing a copy to Dr. Moore (27th February
 1791) he described the *Elegy* as 'a tribute to the memory
 of a man I loved much.'

On the 'authority of Allan Cunningham,' and the
 'poet's manuscripts of the finished piece' [which apparently he had not seen], Scott Douglas, ignoring the
 arrangement in Editions '93 and '94, transferred the motto
 to what he describes as 'its original place at the end of
 the Epitaph which seemed to close abruptly wanting it';
 and inserted instead a legend from Shakespeare: 'Should
 the poor be flatter'd?' This legend occurs in some early
 mss.; but in the *Second Common Place Book*, the motto
 finally adopted is found, in process of composition, at the
 beginning of the *Elegy*, as afterwards in the text of the
 Author's Editions. The *Elegy* first appeared anonymously
 in *The Edinburgh Magazine* for August 1790.

Scott Douglas affirmed that the early draft [he referred
 to the copy in the possession of Mr. A. C. Lamb, Dundee,
 but erroneously stated its owner to be Mr. Paterson,
 Dundee] wanted the two closing verses and the *Epitaph*.
 This is a mistake; but Stanzas v., vi. and xv. appear at
 the end as 'verses forgot.' Nor does this copy contain
 any important variations not found in the following mss.:—
 the *Second Common Place Book*, the *Afton Lodge Book*,
 and a copy sent to Mrs. Dunlop, now at Lechryan.

STANZA II. LINES 3-6 in the mss. and *The Edinburgh Magazine* read thus:—

'Thee, Matthew, woods and wilds shall mourn
W's a' their birth [one MS. has 'breath']
For whunstone man to grieve wad scorn
For poor plain worth.'

STANZA IV. LINES 4-6 in the mss. and *The Edinburgh Magazine* read thus:—

' *At toddlin leisure,
Or o'er the linns, wi' hasty stens,
Flinging your treasure.*'

ELEGY ON
CAPTAIN
HENDER-
SON

STANZA VII. LINES 3-5 in the MSS. and *The Edinburgh Magazine* read thus :—

' Ye curlews *skirlin* thro' a clud,
Ye *whistlin* plover,
And mourn, ye *birrin* paitrick brood.'

STANZA VIII. LINE 3. 'Ye *deuk* and drake, wi' airy wheels,' MSS. and *The Edinburgh Magazine*. 4. 'Rowte for his sake,' MSS. and *The Edinburgh Magazine*.

STANZA IX. and X. are transposed in Mr. Lamb's and the Lochryan MSS., and in *The Edinburgh Magazine*.

STANZA X. LINE 2. 'In some auld tree, or *aulder* tower,' MSS. and *The Edinburgh Magazine*.

STANZA XI. LINE 2. 'Oft have you heard my *rustic* strains,' MSS. and *The Edinburgh Magazine*. 6. 'Must ever flow,' MSS. and *The Edinburgh Magazine*.

LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

IN enclosing this to Dr. John Moore, 27th February 1791, Burns states that it was begun while he was busy with Percy's *Reliques of English Poetry*: hence its antique flavouring. He sent copies to Mrs. Dunlop, to Mrs. Graham of Fintry, to Clarinda, and to Lady Winifred Coustable, and was at pains to tell each of the four the reason why she was thus specially favoured. In an unpublished letter (Lochryan MSS.) to Mrs. Dunlop (6th June 1790), he wrote :—'You know and with me pity the miserable and unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots. To you and your young ladies I particularly dedicate the following Scots stanza.' It was probably about the same time that in an undated letter—(usually assigned to February 1791, to accord with the date of that to Moore)—he wrote to Mrs. Graham of Fintry :—'Whether it is that the story of our Mary Queen of Scots, has a peculiar effect on the feelings of a poet, or whether I

LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS have in the enclosed ballad succeeded beyond my usual poetic success, I know not; but it has pleased me beyond any effort of my Muse for a good while past; on that account I enclose it particularly to you.' To Clarinda (in an undated letter) he thus expressed himself:—'Such, my dearest Nancy, were the words of the amiable but unfortunate Mary. Misfortune seems to take a peculiar pleasure in darting her arrows against "honest men and bonie lasses." Of this you are too, too just a proof; but may your future fate be a bright exception to the remark!' To Lady Constable the ode was sent at the same time that he acknowledged the present of a snuff-box, the lid of it inlaid with a miniature of Queen Mary.

A *Queen Mary's Lamentation*, quoted in *Calliope* (1788), is worthless; but it contains the expression, 'False woman,' which Burns applies to Elizabeth in his fifth stanza. *The Lament* appeared in Johnson's *Museum*, v. 417.

A ms. in the possession of Mr. George Seton Veitch, Paisley, corresponds substantially with the printed version. The variations noted result from collating the mss. at Lochryan, Kilmarnock (of which a facsimile was printed in 1869), Liverpool (*Glenriddell Book*), Alloway (*Aston Lodge Book*), and the British Museum; with the facsimile of a ms. lately in the possession of Mr. Sabin, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, and another ms. [that sent to Clarinda] in the Watson Collection.

STANZA I. LINE 2. 'On every *spreading* tree,' deleted reading in Kilmarnock ms.: '*Spreading*' would have been better than '*blooming*,' but for the fact that it was necessary to use '*spread*' in the following line. 7. 'But nought can glad the '*careful*' [also '*carefu*'] wight,' MSS.

STANZA II. LINE 4. 'Makes a' *the* echoes ring,' Clarinda ms.

STANZA III. LINE 6. 'May rove *these* [also '*thas*' and '*thir*'] sweets *among*,' MSS. 8. 'Maun lie in prison *strong*,' MSS.

STANZA IV. LINE 3. 'Fu' lightly *rose* I on the morn,' MSS.:—Edition '93 has 'Fu' lightly *rose* I on morn.' Edition

'94 has '*in*' for '*on*'; but this, though the better reading, is not found in any MS. 7. '*But here I lie in foreign bands,*' LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS
Lochryan MS.

STANZA VI. LINE 5. '*Heaven shield thee from thy mother's face,*' Clarinda MS.

STANZA VII. LINES 3 and 4 in most of the manuscripts read thus:—

'Nae mair the *winds of autumn wave*
Across the yellow corn.'

But the *Aston Lodge Book* instead of '*across*' has '*out o'er*,' apparently a transitional reading. 6. '*Let winter o'er me rave,*' Clarinda MS. 8. '*Bloom o'er my peaceful grave,*' MSS.

TO ROBERT GRAHAM OF FINTRY

THE Grahams of Fintry were a younger branch of the Montrose family, being descended from Sir Robert Graham of Strathcaro, son of Sir William Graham of Kincardine by his second wife, Mary Stewart, second daughter of King Robert II., of whom Sir Robert's eldest son, also named Robert, inherited the lands and ancient castle of Fintry, in the parish of Mains and Strathmartin, Forfarshire. Burns's benefactor, Robert Graham—born 17th January 1749—is commonly designated of Fintry, but sold the estate in 1780 to Erskine of Lintrathen; became Commissioner of Excise in 1787; and died 6th January 1815.

Burns first met Graham of Fintry at the Duke of Atholl's during his northern tour in August 1787; and in an undated letter in which he refers to this, solicited his influence in obtaining an appointment to a division in the Excise. In a letter dated 10th September 1788, he made a special request in regard to a division in the Ellisland district, enclosing at the same time the poetical epistle, '*Requesting a Favour*' (see vol. ii.). Obtaining the division, he acknowledged Fintry's exertions in the epistle on '*Receiving a Favour*' (see vol. ii.); and in an

TO *Election Ballad*, made at the close of the contest for the
 ROBERT Dumfries Burghs in 1790 (see vol. ii.), he addressed him
 GRAHAM thus :—
 OFFINTRY

'Fintry, my stay in worldly strife,
 Friend of my Muse, friend of my life':—

a eulogy amply justified by Fintry's consistent and considerate kindness to him, through good and bad report, to the close of his life. The present *Epistle* was sent 6th October 1791, with a letter in which he describes it as 'a sheetful of groans, wrung from me in my elbow-chair, with one unlucky leg on my stool before me.' There is some poetical licence—let us call it so—in this description: not as regards his own condition, for he was then confined to his arm-chair by a bruised leg, but: as regards the *Epistle* itself, for, with the exception of the introductory and closing lines, it consists of two revised and retrenched fragments, written near three years before, and originally intended, according to his own statement—which need not be taken quite seriously—to form part of a *Poet's Progress*. We give the larger in the form in which it was originally sent (29th October 1788) to Mrs. Dunlop:—

'Thou, Nature, partial Nature, I arraign;
 Of thy caprice maternal I cotplain.
The peopled fold thy kindly care have found,
The horned bull tremendous, spurns the ground;
The lordly Lion has enough and more,
The forest trembles at his very roar;
 Thou giv'st the ass his hide, the snail his shell.
 The poisonous wasp, victorious, guards his cell.
Thy Minion man exulting in his powers
In field, court, camp, by altars base devours.
 Foxes and statesmen subtle wiles ensue;
 The cit and polecat stink, and are secure;
 Toads with their poison, doctors with their drug,
 The priest and hedgehog in their robes are snug,
Kings bear the civil, priests the sacred blade,
Soldiers and hangmen murder by their trade;

Even silly women have defensive arts
Their eyes and tongue—and nameless other parts.
 But O thou cruel stepmother and hard,
 To that poor fenceless naked thing, a Bard !
 A thing unteachable in *worldly* skill,
 And half an idiot too, more helpless still :
 No heels to bear him from the op'ning dun,
 No claws to dig, his hated sight to shun :
 No horns, but those of luckless Hymen worn,
 And those, alas ! not Amalthea's horn :
His dart satyric, his unheeded sting :
And idle fancy's pinion, all his wing :
The silly sheep that wanders wild astray
Not more unfriended and not more a prey ;
 Vampyre-booksellers drain him to the heart
 And butcher critics cut him up by art.
 Critics—appall'd I venture on the name,
 Those *bandits* that infest the paths of fame,
 Bloody dissectors, worse than ten Monroes,
 He hacks to teach, they mangle to expose :
 His heart by *wanton, causeless malice* wrung,
 By blockheads daring even to madness stung,
 Torn, bleeding, tortur'd, in th' unequal strife
 The hapless Poet *flounces* on thro' life :
Till fled each muse that glorious once inspir'd,
Extinct each ray that once his bosom fired.
 Low-sunk in *feeble*, unprotected age,
 Dead even resentment for his inspir'd page,
 He *feels* no more the ruthless Critic's rage,
 So by some hedge the generous steed *deceas'd*,
 To half-starved, snarling curs a *dainty* feast ;
 By toil and famine wore to skin and bone,
 Lies, senseless of each tugging bitch's son.'

TO
 ROBERT
 GRAHAM
 OF FINTRY

'Thus far only have I,' wrote Burns, in the unpublished letter (Lochryan mss.) enclosing the lines, 'proceeded, and perhaps I may never again resume the subject. I must mention one caution to you, Madam, with respect to these verses. I have a remote idea that I may one day use them as instruments of vengeance, and consequently I will hide them like a conspirator's dagger. I mean this lest you might inadvertently mention them, or

TO acknowledge them as your old acquaintance should you
 ROBERT meet with them anonymously in the newspaper. I need
 GRAHAM not add that I allude to a certain Bookseller's connection
 OF FINTRY and mine.'

The second fragment, beginning, 'O Dulness' and ending 'vaulted hell,' was sent to Mrs. Dunlop, 1st March 1789. We have been favoured with a copy by Mr. Robert Clarke, Cincinnati, Ohio; but the variations from the printed set are comparatively slight. The variations given below are those occurring in mss. of the finished *Epistle*. For a copy of perhaps the earliest—ms. (A)—we are indebted to Mr. Robert Clarke. Another ms.—ms. (B)—is included in the *Glenriddell Book* at Liverpool.

LINE 1. 'Late crippled of an arm and now a leg.' In a letter to Mrs. Dunlop (7th February 1791, if the date be rightly given), Burns mentions that, his horse having fallen with him, for some time he had been unable to use his hand and arm in writing. If this accident happened before February, he had a similar mischance in the end of March, when, as he states in a letter to A. F. Tytler, his horse came down with him, and broke his right arm. The hurt to his leg is mentioned in a letter to Peter Hill, as well as in the letter to Graham of Fintry. 3. 'Dull, listless, teas'd, neglected, and deprest,' deleted reading in ms. (A). 9. 'Thou, Nature,' etc. :—Thus Burns in both Editions and all mss., although it is ungrammatical. 11. 'The peopled fold thy kindly care have found,' deleted reading in ms. (A). 12. 'The horned bull tremendous spurns the ground,' deleted reading in ms. (A). 14. 'The poisonous wasp, victorious guards his cell,' deleted reading in ms. (A). 21-22 in ms. (A) and ms. (B) read thus :—

'Ev'n silly women have defensive arts,
 Their eyes, their tongue—and nameless other parts.'

25. 'A thing unteachable in worldly skill,' mss. (A and B).
 32. 'Clad in fat Dulness' comfortable fur,' ms. (A), 'rich' as printed being deleted. 36. 'And viper critics cureless venom dart,' ms. (A). 44. 'By wretches torn, who ne'er one sprig must wear,' ms. (A). 46. 'The hapless Poet flounces

on thro' life,' MS. (A). 62. 'Conscious *their high desert* they well deserve,' deleted reading in MS. (A). 64. 'The *sage grave* *hearn* thus easy picks his frog,' MS. (B). 76-77. A reading of these lines in MS. (A) stood thus:—

' *And thou, too, Fate, relentless and severe,
I with a husband's, father's feelings fear.*

80-81. 'Fled,' *etc.*, are omitted in both MSS. 83. 'My Friend, my other stay, long bless and spare,' deleted reading in MS. (A).

TO
ROBERT
GRAHAM
OFFINTRY

LAMENT FOR JAMES EARL OF GLENCAIRN

JAMES CUNNINGHAM, fourteenth Earl of Glencairn, second son of William, thirteenth earl, and the eldest daughter of Hugh M'Guire, a violinist in Ayr, whose family had been adopted by Governor Macrae of the H. E. I. C., was born in 1749; succeeded to the earldom in 1775; made the acquaintance of Burns—through James Dalrymple of Orangefield—in Edinburgh in 1786, and introduced him to Creech the publisher; succeeded in obtaining for the Edinburgh Edition the patronage of the Caledonian Hunt, and also exerted himself to the utmost to secure subscriptions among the nobility; used his influence in getting Burns an appointment in the Excise, and is always referred to by the poet in terms of the warmest regard. Owing to ill-health, he went to Lisbon in 1790 to pass the winter; but, finding himself rapidly failing, resolved to return, and died, after landing at Falmouth, 30th January 1791. Learning of his death, Burns wrote thus to his factor, Alexander Dalziel:—'Dare I trouble you to let me know privately before the day of interment, that I may cross the country, and steal among the crowd, to pay a tear to the last sight of my ever revered benefactor?'

In a letter to Glencairn's sister, Lady Elizabeth Cunningham—conjecturally (but wrongly) dated by Scott Douglas 'March 1791' (it was written not earlier than Septem-

LAMENT ber, and most probably in October)—concerning a copy FOR EARL of the *Lament*, 'If,' he wrote, 'among my children I OF GLEN- shall have a son that has a heart, he shall hand it down CAIRN to his child as a family honour and a family debt that my dearest existence I owe to the noble heart of Glencairn.' He named his fourth son (born 12th August 1794) 'James Glencairn Burna.' On the 23rd October he sent a copy of the poem to Lady Don (ms. now in the University of Edinburgh) with this inscription:—'To Lady Harriet Don this poem, not the fictitious creation of poetic fancy, but the breathings of real woe from a bleeding heart, is respectfully and gratefully presented by the author.' In the note enclosing it he wrote:—'As all the world knows my obligations to the late noble Earl of Glencairn, I wish to make my obligations equally conspicuous by publishing the poem. But in what way shall I publish it? It is too small a piece to publish alone. The way which suggests itself to me is to send it to the publisher of one of the most reputed periodical works—*The Bee*, for instance. Lady Betty has referred me to you.' It did not appear in *The Bee*. The following variations occur in mss. at the British Museum, Edinburgh University, Liverpool, or Lochryan, all very nearly corresponding:—

STANZA I. LINE 1. 'The *winds* blew hollow frae the hills,' Edinburgh University MS. 2. 'By fits the sun's *descending* beam,' MSS.

STANZA II. LINE 3. 'His locks were bleached white *by* time,' MSS. 4. 'His *aged* cheek was wet wi' tears,' Edinburgh University MS.

STANZA III. LINE 2. 'The reliques o' the vernal *queire*,' MSS. 4. 'The honours o' the aged year,' MSS.

STANZA IV. LINE 2. 'That *lang* has stood the wind and rain,' MSS. 3. 'And now has come a cruel blast,' Liverpool MS. 4. 'And my last *hald* of earth is gane,' Lochryan MS. and 1793.

STANZA V. LINE 1. 'I've seen sae mony *change*ful years,' MSS.

- STANZA VII. LINE 3. 'Awake, resound, *my* latest lay,' MSS. LAMENT
 8. 'Thou *brought'st* from Fortune's mirkest gloom,' MSS. FOR EARL
 STANZA IX. LINE 8. 'That laid my benefactor low,' MSS. OF GLEN-
 STANZA X. LINE 5. 'The mother may forget her *bairn*,' MSS. CAIRN
 7-8 in the MSS. read thus:—

'But I'll remember *good* Glencairn,
 And a' that *he has* done for me.'

The change in the text was made in deference to the objections of the family to the word '*good*,' and it is said that the final reading was suggested by Miss Leslie Baillie.

LINES SENT TO SIR JOHN WHITEFOORD, BART.

SIR JOHN WHITEFOORD was, like Glencairn, the warm friend of Burns, who wrote *The Braces of Ballochmyle* (Vol. iii.) in 1783 on the occasion of the family's being compelled to sell the estate of that name. The copy sent to Sir John Whitefoord—MS. (A)—is in the British Museum. The verses were also inserted in the *Glenriddell Book*, now at Liverpool.

LINES 5-6 in MS. (A) and MS. (B) read thus:—

'Witness the ardour of this votive lay,
 With streaming eyes and throbbing heart, I pray.'

8. 'And tread the *dreary* path to that dark world unknown,' MS. (A), 1793 and 1794. While Edition '93 (probably) was passing through the press, Burns in an undated letter to A. F. Tytler wrote:—'If the lines to Sir John Whitefoord are printed they ought to read:

'And tread the *shadowy* path to that dark world unknown':

"*shadowy*," instead of "*dreary*," as I believe it stands at present.' In MS. (B)—written before this date—the reading is '*shadowy*.'

TAM O' SHANTER

ALLOWAY KIRK was originally the church of the *quondam* parish of Alloway; but this parish having been annexed to that of Ayr in 1690, the church fell more or

TAM O' SHANTER less to ruin, and when Burns wrote had been roofless for half a century. It stands some two hundred yards to the north of the picturesque Auld Brig of Doon, which dates from about the beginning of the Fifteenth Century, and in Burns's time was the sole means of communication over the steep-banked Doon between Carrick and Kyle. The old road to Ayr ran west of the Kirk: the more direct road dating from the erection of the New Brig—a little west of the old one—in 1815.

Burns's birthplace is about three-fourths of a mile to the north; so that the ground and its legends were familiar to him from the first. Writing to Francis Grose (first published in Sir Egerton Brydges' *Censura Literaria*, 1796), 'Among the many witch-stories I have heard,' he says, 'relating to Alloway Kirk, I distinctly remember only two or three. Upon a stormy night, amid whistling squalls of wind and bitter blasts of hail—in short, on such a night as the devil would choose to take the air in—a farmer, or farmer's servant, was plodding and plashing homeward with his plough-irons on his shoulder, having been getting some repairs on them at a neighbouring smithy. His way lay by the Kirk of Alloway; and being rather on the anxious look-out in approaching a place so well known to be a favourite haunt of the devil, and the devil's friends and emissaries, he was struck aghast by discovering through the horrors of the storm and stormy night, a light, which on his nearer approach plainly shewed itself to proceed from the haunted edifice. Whether he had been fortified from above on his devout supplication, as is customary with people when they suspect the immediate presence of Satan, or whether, according to another custom, he had got courageously drunk at the smithy, I will not pretend to determine; but so it was, that he ventured to go up to, nay into, the very Kirk. As luck would have it, his temerity came off unpunished. The members of the infernal junto were all out on some midnight business or other, and he saw

nothing but a kind of kettle or cauldron, depending from **TAM O'**
the roof, over the fire, simmering some heads of un- **SHANTER**
christened children, limbs of executed malefactors, etc.,
for the business of the night. It was, in for a penny, in
for a pound with the honest ploughman: so without
ceremony he unhooked the cauldron from the fire, and
pouring out the damnable ingredients, inverted it on his
head, and carried it fairly home, where it remained
long in the family, a living evidence of the truth of the
story. Another story, which I can prove to be equally
authentic, was as follows:—On a market-day in the town
of Ayr, a farmer from Carrick, and consequently whose
way lay by the very gate of Alloway Kirkyard, in order to
cross the river Doon at the old bridge, which is about two
or three hundred yards further on than the said gate, had
been detained by his business till by the time he reached
Alloway it was the wizard hour between night and morn-
ing. Though he was terrified with a blaze streaming
from the Kirk, yet, as it is a well-known fact, that to turn
back on these occasions is running by far the greatest
risk of mischief, he prudently advanced on his road.
When he had reached the gate of the Kirkyard, he was
surprised and entertained, through the ribs and arches of
an old Gothic window, which still faces the highway, to
see a dance of witches merrily footing it round their old
sooty blackguard master, who was keeping them all alive
with the power of his bagpipe. The farmer, stopping his
horse to observe them a little, could plainly descry the
faces of many old women of his acquaintance and neigh-
bourhood. How the gentleman was dressed, tradition
does not say, but that the ladies were all in their smocks:
and one of them happening unluckily to have a smock
which was considerably too short to answer all the pur-
pose of that piece of dress, our farmer was so tickled
that he involuntarily burst out with a loud laugh, "Weel
luppen, Maggy wi' the short sark!" and recollecting
himself, instantly spurred his horse to the top of his

TAM O' SHANTER speed. I need not mention the universally known fact, that no diabolical power can pursue you beyond the middle of a running stream. Lucky it was for the poor farmer that the river Doon was so near, for notwithstanding the speed of the horse, which was a good one, when he reached the middle of the arch of the bridge, and consequently the middle of the stream, the pursuing vengeful hags were so close at his heels that one of them actually sprang to seize him : but it was too late ; nothing was on her side of the stream but the horse's tail, which immediately gave way at her infernal grip, as if blasted by a stroke of lightning ; but the farmer was beyond her reach. However, the unsightly tailless condition of the vigorous steed was, to the last hour of the noble creature's life, an awful warning to the Carrick farmers not to stay too late in Ayr markets.

'The last relation I shall give, though equally true, is not so well identified as the two former with regard to the scene ; but as the best authorities give it for Alloway, I shall relate it. On a summer's evening, about the time nature puts on her robes to mourn the empty of the cheerful day, a shepherd boy, belonging to a farmer in the immediate neighbourhood of Alloway Kirk, had just folded his charge and was returning home. As he passed the Kirk, in the adjoining field, he fell in with a crew of men and women who were busy pulling stems of the plant ragwort. He observed that as each person pulled a ragwort, he or she got astride of it and called out, "Up horse !" on which the ragwort flew off, like Pegasus, through the air with its rider. The foolish boy likewise pulled his ragwort, and cried with the rest, "Up horse !" and, strange to tell, away he flew with the company. The first stage at which the cavalcade stopped was a merchant's wine-cellar in Bordeaux, where, without saying by your leave, they quaffed away at the best the cellar could afford until the morning, for to the lumps and works of darkness, threatened to throw light on the matter, and frightened them

from their carousals. The poor shepherd lad, being equally a stranger to the scene and the liquor, heedlessly got himself drunk; and when the rest took horse he fell asleep, and was found so next day by some of the people belonging to the merchant. Somebody that understood Scotch, asking him what he was, he said such a one's herd in Alloway; and by some means or other getting home again, he lived long to tell the world the wondrous tale.' TAM O'
SHANTER

For the rhythmus of *Tam o' Shanter*, see *ante*, Prefatory Note to *The Two Dogs* (p. 319). The motto is the eighteenth verse of Gavin Douglas's sixth 'Proloug' (*Eneados*), and should read thus:—'Of browneis and of bogillis full this buke.'

Probably Burns drew the suggestion of his hero, Tam o' Shanter, from the character and adventures of Douglas Graham—born 6th January 1739, died 23th June 1811—son of Robert Graham, farmer at Douglastown, tenant of the farm of Shanter on the Carrick Shore, and owner of a boat which he had named *Tam o' Shanter*. Graham was noted for his convivial habits, which his wife's ratings tended rather to confirm than to eradicate. Tradition relates that once, when his long-tailed grey mare had waited even longer than usual for her master at the tavern door, certain humourists plucked her tail to such an extent as to leave it little better than a stump, and that Graham, on his attention being called to its state next morning, swore that it had been been depilated by the witches at Alloway Kirk (*MS. Notes* by D. Auld of Ayr in Edinburgh University Library). The prototype—if prototype there were—of Souter Johnnie is more doubtful; but a shoemaker named John Davidson—born 1728, died 30th June 1806—did live for some time at Glenfoot of Ardlochan, near the farm of Shanter, whence he removed to Kirkoswald.

In Alloway Kirk and its surroundings, apart from its uncanny associations, Burns cherished a special interest. 'When my father,' says Gilbert, 'feued his little pro-

TAM O' SHANTER perty near Alloway Kirk the wall of the churchyard had gone to ruin, and cattle had free liberty of pasturing in it. My father and two or three other neighbours joined in an application to the Town Council of Ayr, who were superiors of the adjoining land, for liberty to rebuild it, and raised by subscription a sum for enclosing this ancient cemetery with a wall; hence he came to consider it as his burial-place, and we learned the reverence for it people generally have for the burial-place of their ancestors.' When, therefore, Burns met Captain Grose—then on his peregrinations through Scotland—at the house of Captain Riddell, he suggested a drawing of the ruin; and 'the captain,' Gilbert says, 'agreed to the request, provided the poet would furnish a witch story to be printed along with it.' It is probable that Burns originally sent the stories told above for insertion in the work, and that the narrative in rhyme was an afterthought. Lockhart, on Cromek's authority, accepts a statement, said to have been made by Mrs. Burns, that the piece was the work of a single day, and on this very slender evidence divers critics have indulged in a vast amount of admiration. Burns's general dictum must, however, be borne in mind:—'All my poetry is the effect of easy composition, but of laborious correction'; together with his special verdict on *Tam o' Shanter* (letter to Mrs. Dunlop, April 1791) that it 'showed a finishing polish,' which he despaired of 'ever excelling.' It appeared in Grose's *Antiquities*—published in April 1791—the captain's indebtedness being thus acknowledged:—'To my ingenious friend, Mr. Robert Burns, I have been seriously obligated: he was not only at the pains of making out what was most worthy of notice in Ayrshire, the county honoured by his birth, but he also wrote, expressly for this work, the *pretty tale* annexed to Alloway Church.'

Ere Grose's work was before the public, the piece made its appearance in *The Edinburgh Magazine* for March 1791; and it was also published in *The Edinburgh Herald* of 18th

March 1791. The ms. now in the Kilmarnock Museum— **TAM O' SHANTER** ms. (A)—of which a photolithograph was published in 1869, is of special interest for some of its deleted readings. The copy at Lochryan—ms. (B)—was written in or before November 1790 (Letter to Mrs. Dunlop). Sometime before publication Burns recited *Tam o' Shanter* to Robert Ainslie, when he visited Ellisland, and, after his departure home, sent him a copy, which Ainslie gave to Sir Walter Scott, and which is now at Abbotsford—ms. (C). It is thus prefaced:—'Alloway Kirk, the scene of the following poem, is an old ruin in Ayrshire, hard by the road from Ayr to Maybole, on the banks of the river Doon, and very near the old bridge of that name. A drawing of this ruin, accompanied perhaps with *Tam o' Shanter*, will make its appearance in Grose's *Antiquities of Scotland*.' The piece is inscribed in the *Afton Lodge Book* at Alloway—ms. (D)—and the *Glenriddell Book* at Liverpool—ms. (E). There is also a copy in the Observatory at Dumfries: it is so framed as to show the front page alone.

LINE 8. 'The waters, mosses, slaps, and styles,' mss. (B, D and E). 25. 'That every naig was ca'd a shoe on,' 1793. 27. 'That at the *L—d's* even on Sunday,' periodicals. 28. 'Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean till Monday':—The Jean referred to is supposed to have been Jean Kennedy of Kirkoswald, who with her sister kept a very respectable tavern, sometimes called the Ladies' House. 29. 'She prophesied that late or soon,' 1794. 30. 'Thou wad be found deep drowned in Doon,' mss. and periodicals. 37. 'But to our tale: *ae market night*,' 1794. 44. 'They had been fou for weeks together,' Grose. 47. 'The landlady grew unco gracious,' ms. (B). 48. 'Wi' favours, secret, sweet, and precious,' 1793 and 1794. 50. 'The landlord's laugh was ready chorus':—On ms. (C) Robert Ainslie has noted that when Burns recited to him the poem at Ellisland he added these lines:—

'The crickets joined the chirping cry,
The kittlin chased her tail for joy.'

52. 'Tam did na care the storm a whistle,' deleted reading in ms. (A). 54. 'E'en drown'd himself amang the nappy,' 1794;

TAM O' *'among,'* MS. (D):—This line and the previous one are in MS. **SHAWTHER** (A) written on the margin, being evidently an afterthought. 55. 'As boss flee hame *laden wi'* treasure,' deleted reading in MS. (A). 56. 'Ill minute winged *it's* way wi' pleasure,' deleted reading in MS. (A). 62. 'Or like the snow falls in the river':—The relative *'that'* or *'which'* should be understood between 'snow' and 'fall.' Chambers gave this preposterous attempt at amendment:—'Or like the *snowfall* in the river'; and Scott Douglas took upon him to affirm that Burns would have preferred 'snowflake' before 'snowfall.' Plainly Burns preferred the line as it is. 71. 'And sic a night he *took* the road in,' MSS.; 'Tam,' deleted reading for 'he' in MS. (A). 73. 'The wind blew as *would* blown its last,' MS. (A). 74. 'The rattling *show'rs* rose on the blast,' 1794. 79. 'Weel mounted on his *grey meave* Meg,' MSS., Grose, and periodicals. 83. 'Whiles *hudding* fast his guid blue bonnet,' periodicals. 84. 'Whiles crooning o'er an Auld Scots sonnet,' MS. (A). 85. 'Whiles *glowering* round wi' prudent cares,' 1793. 95. 'And near the *true* aboon the well,' deleted reading in MS. (A). 113. 'She ventur'd forward to the light,' periodicals. 114. 'And *wow*! Tam saw an unco sight,' MSS. and Grose. 116. 'Nae *cotillon* brent new frae France,' MSS. and Grose:—'Brent new' means quite new: new from the fire or forge. The term is no doubt agricultural. 125-8. 'Coffins stood round,' etc.:—Of these four matchless lines the first draft, as deleted in MS. (A), was:—

*'The torches climb around the wa'
Infernal fires, blue-blessing a.'*

136. 'Five scymitars,' etc.:—After this line these two, deleted in MS. (A), were inserted:—

*'Seven gallows pines; three hangman's whistles;
A row o' weel seal'd Doctor's bottles.'*

142. 'Which even to name,' etc.:—At this point, these four lines occur in all the MSS. and in Grose and the periodicals:—

*'Three Lawyers' tongues, turned inside out,
Wi' lies seamed like a beggar's clout;
Three Priests' hearts, rotten black as muck,
Lay stinking, vile, in every nook':—*

but on Tytler's advice they were omitted from the Author's Editions. 153. 'Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flainen,'

mss. and Grose. 154. 'Seventeen hunder linen':—Woven TAM O' in a reed of 1700 divisions. 160. 'Rigwoodie hags would SHANTER spean a foal':—The rigwoodie is the rope or chain that crosses the saddle of a horse. Some editors translate the phrase as gallows-worthy. 'Rig' is also a name for a strumpet, and the word read backwards might mean 'gallows-strumpet.' On the other hand, the simile refers to a mare, and it is probable that 'rigwoodie' here means ancient or lean. 170. 'And held the country-side in fear,' alternative reading in MS. (A). 175. 'Ah little *thought* thy reverend grannie,' mss., Grose and periodicals. 182. 'A souple *jade* she was and strang,' 1793 and 1794. 188. 'Tam *lost* his reason a' thegither,' mss., Grose and periodicals, with '*together*' for 'thegither.' 195. 'When plundering herds':—Boy-herds who were in the habit of plundering the hives of humble-bees. 199. 'When "*haud* the thief" resounds aloud,' mss. (B and C). 201. 'Wi' mony an eldritch *shout* and hollo,' mss. (B, C, D, and E), and Grose:—It is probable that '*shout*' was suggested by Grose as a substitute for '*shriech*,' but MS. (A) has *shriech*, and the poet reverted to it in '93 and '94; '*holow*,' Grose and Editions '93 and '94; but the mss. have either '*hollo*' or '*holla*,' even including MS. (A), where the '*w*' in hollow is deleted. 206. 'And win the key-stane o' the brig':—It is a well-known fact that witches, or any evil spirits, have no power to follow a poor wight any farther than the middle of the next running stream. It may be proper likewise to mention to the benighted traveller, that when he falls in with *bogles*, whatever danger may be in his going forward, there is much more hazard in turning back' (R. B. in Editions '93 and '94). 207. 'Thy fairin'—See Note to *Death and Dr. Hornbook*, STANZA xxx. Line 6, p. 393. 214. 'But little *hend* [or *hent*] she Maggie's mettle,' mss. 220. '*Each* man,' and mother's son take heed,' mss. 225. 'Remember Tam o' Shanter's *meare*,' mss., Grose, and periodicals.

ON SEEING A WOUNDED HARE

ON 21st April 1789 Burns enclosed a copy of this production—ms. (A)—in an unpublished letter to Mrs. Dunlop (Lochryan mss.):—'Two mornings ago, as I was

ON at a very early hour sowing in the fields, I heard a shot,
 SEEING A and presently a poor little hare limped by me apparently
 WOUNDED very much hurt. You will easily guess this set my
 HARE humanity in tears and my indignation in arms. The
 following was the result, which please read to the young
 ladies. I believe you may include the Major too, as what-
 ever I have said of shooting hares I have not spoken one
 irreverent word against coursing them. This is according
 to your just right the very first copy I wrote.' Enclos-
 ing a draft—ms. (B)—to Alexander Cunningham, 4th
 May 1789 (in a letter only partly published in any collec-
 tion of the *Correspondence*), Burns, after a somewhat
 similar account of the incident, added:—'You will guess
 my indignation at the inhuman fellow who could shoot a
 hare at this season, when all of them have young ones;
 and it gave me no little gloomy satisfaction to see the
 poor injured creature escape him.' Another copy—
 ms. (C)—sent to Lady Don, is in the University Library,
 Edinburgh. It was also inscribed in the *Second Common
 Place Book*—ms. (D)—and the *Aston Lodge Book*, now at
 Alloway—ms. (E). The title of the early mss. is *On
 seeing a Fellow wound a Hare with a Shot*.

On 2nd June 1789 Dr. Gregory sent to Burns a some-
 what supercilious criticism, which induced him (however)
 to change one or two expressions for the better. regard-
 ing the measure Dr. Gregory remarked that it was 'not a
 good one'; that it did not 'flow well'; and that the rhyme
 of the fourth line was 'almost lost by its distance from
 the first, and the two interposed close rhymes': hence,
 'Dr. Gregory is a good man, but he crucifies me' (R. B.).
 Burns's use of his stanza is groping and tentative; and
 the effect of his piece is one of mere frigidity.

STANZA I. LINE 4. 'Nor *ever* pleasure glad thy cruel
 heart,' all MSS. and 1793.

STANZA II. LINE 3. 'No more the thickening brakes *or*
 verdant plains,' MSS. (A and B). 4. 'To thee *or* home, or
 food, or pastime yield,' MSS. (A, B, C, and D):—There is

no authority for the reading '*a home*,' which has crept into the text of modern editions, beyond an error in Currie (see Cunningham's letter, as printed there and elsewhere).

STANZA III. in MSS. (A, B, and C), reads as follows :—

ON
SEEING A
WOUNDED
HARE

'Seek, mangl'd innocent, some wonted form,
That wonted form, alas ! thy dying bed,
The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head,
The cold earth with thy blood-stained bosom warm.'

Of the changes suggested by, or made in deference to, Gregory :—'*Mangled*,' which Burns left, he pronounced 'a coarse word'; and '*innocent*,' for which Burns substituted '*wretch*,' he damned as a 'nursery word,' admitting, however, that both 'might pass.' For '*blood-stained*' he suggested '*bleeding*,' and Burns adopted '*bloody*.' 1. 'Seek, mangled wretch, some *haunt* of wonted rest,' MS. (E).

Between STANZAS III. and IV. another was introduced. It reads thus in the copy sent to Mrs. Dunlop :—

'Perhaps a mother's anguish adds its woe ;
The playful pair crowd fondly by thy side ;
Ah ! little nurslings who will now provide
That life a mother only can bestow ?'

In the copy sent to Alexander Cunningham '*helpless*' was substituted for '*little*' in LINE 3 :—'I am doubtful whether it would not have been an improvement to keep out the last stanza but one altogether' (R. B.). In MS. (D) he changed the three last verses of the stanza to this :—

'The playful pair *espy thee o'er the plain*,
Ah ! helpless ['*hapless*' deleted] nurslings who will now sustain
Your little lives or shield you from the foe ;

apparently in deference to Gregory's objection to 'Who will now provide,' etc., as 'not grammar' and 'not intelligible.' Still, his final judgment, though modern editors have not respected it, was that the stanza was superfluous : it being neither inscribed in the *Afton Lodge Book* nor retained in his own Editions.

STANZA IV. LINE 4. 'And curse the ruffian's *art* and mourn thy hapless fate,' alternative reading in MS. (D) :—There is no authority for a modern reading, '*arm*,' which originally was a misprint. MS. (C) reads '*ruthless wretch*' for '*wretch's aim*.'

ADDRESS TO THE SHADE OF THOMSON

WHEN, in 1791, the eccentric Earl of Buchan instituted an annual festival in commemoration of James Thomson, by crowning, with a wreath of bays, a bust of the poet surmounting the Ionic temple erected in his honour on the grounds in Dryburgh, he sent an invitation to Burns and suggested that he might compose an ode. Burns was harvesting, and must needs decline; but, in regard to the second half of the invitation, he (29th August 1791) wrote as follows:—‘Your lordship hints at an ode for the occasion; but who would write after Collins? I read over his verses to the memory of Thomson and despaired. I attempted three or four stanzas, in the way of address to the shade of the Bard, on crowning his bust. I trouble your lordship with the enclosed copy of them, which, I am afraid, will be but too convincing a proof how unequal I am to the task you would obligingly assign me.’ The piece is closely modelled upon Collins’s ode. After Burns’s death Lord Buchan set up in his memory a Parian urn beside the bust of Thomson. The *Address* appeared in *The Edinburgh Advertiser* of 13th September 1791, under the heading, *Thomson’s Birthday*, and the following announcement:—‘If the weather proves favourable, the coronation of the bust of Thomson with a wreath of bays will be performed on Ednam Hill, on Thursday the 23d inst.; if otherwise, in Horsington ballroom.’ After the ceremony the *Address* was published with the Earl’s speech in *The Gentleman’s and European Magazines* for November 1791. The *Address* also appeared in *The Glasgow Weekly Miscellany* of 2nd November 1791; and, with Burns’s letter, was published in the Earl of Buchan’s *Essay on the Life of Thomson*, 1792. There is a copy in the Watson MSS., and an early draft in Mr. Alfred Morrison’s Collection. The latter gives an alternative reading of Stanza III. :—

'While Autumn on Tweed's fruitful side
 With sober pace and hoary head
Surveys in self-approving pride
 Each creature on his bounty fed.'

ADDRESS
 TO THE
 SHADE OF
 THOMSON

Currie states that 'in the first ms.' the first three Stanzas read thus :—

'While cold-eyed Spring, a virgin coy,
 Unfolds her verdant mantle sweet,
 Or pranks the sod in frolic joy,
A carpet for her youthful feet ;

'While Summer with a matron's grace,
Walks stately in the cooling shade,
 And, oft delighted, loves to trace
 The progress of the spiky blade ;

'While Autumn, benefactor kind,
With Age's hoary honours clad,
Surveys with self-approving mind
 Each creature on his bounty fed.'

STANZA V. LINE 2. 'Shall bloom that wreath thou well
 hast won,' 1793.

ON THE LATE CAPTAIN GROSE'S PEREGRINA- TIONS THRO' SCOTLAND

THE son of Francis Grose, a Swiss, who had settled as a jeweller at Richmond, Surrey, Francis Grose was born at Greenford, Middlesex, about 1731; was educated as an artist, and exhibited at the Royal Academy; in 1755 became Richmond Herald; was made Adjutant in the Hampshire, and latterly Captain and Adjutant in the Surrey militias; published *Antiquities of England and Wales*, 1773-1787; made the acquaintance of Burns during his antiquarian tour in Scotland in 1789 (see *ante*, p. 437, Prefatory Note to *Tam o' Shanter*); published *Antiquities of Scotland*, 1789-1791; was author of many treatises in different branches of antiquarian lore, as well as various miscellaneous works—among them

ON THE an excellent *Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (1785); and
LATE died (of apoplexy) 12th May 1791. His remarkable cor-
CAPTAIN pulgence is suggested in the *Epigram on Captain Francis*
GROSE *Grose* (see vol. ii.); and his wanderings are further de-
 noted in the lively verses beginning 'Ken you aught o'
 Captain Grose?' (Vol. ii.). He had his own share of
 humour, and was an 'inimitable boon companion.'

The piece on his *Peregrinations* was first published in
The Edinburgh Evening Courant of 27th August 1789,
 under the signature 'Thomas A. Linn.' It was copied
 thence into *The Kelso Chronicle* of 4th September;
 and it also appeared in *The Glasgow Weekly Miscellany*,
 3rd May 1790, *The Edinburgh Magazine* for October 1791,
 and *The Scots Magazine* for November 1791. It was pub-
 lished in a Glasgow chap-book (undated) as an '*Address*
to the People of Scotland respecting Francis Grose, Esq.,
The British Antiquarian, by Robert Burns the Ayrshire
 poet, to which are added *Verses on seeing the ruin of*
an ancient Abbey'; and again (in 1796) by Stewart and
 Meikle, Glasgow, in the same tract as *An Unco' Mournful*
Tale [The Two Herds], under the title of *The Antiquarian*.
 It is inscribed in the *Glenriddell Book*—ms. (A); and
 another ms.—ms. (B)—is in the possession of Mr. Fraser-
 Tytler of Aldourie Castle.

STANZA III. LINE 1. 'By some auld howlet-haunted biggin':
 —' *Vide his Antiquities of Scotland*' (R. B.).

STANZA VI. LINE 2. 'Rusty airm caps and jinglin jackets':
 —' *Vide his treatise on ancient armour and weapons*' (R. B.).
 5. 'And *pitcher-pats*, and auld *san-buckets*,' *magazines*. 6.
 'Afore the flood,' *Courant* and *Weekly Miscellany*.

STANZA VII. LINE 5. 'A broomstick of the witch of Endor,'
 ms. (A).

STANZA VIII. LINES 1-2. in the *Courant*, *The Weekly Mis-*
cellany, and *The Scots Magazine*, read thus:—

'Besides he'll cut you aff fu' gleg
 The shape of Adam's philabeg.'

3. 'The knife that *cuttlet* Abel's craig,' *Courant*, *Weekly Mis-*

cellany, and *Scots Magazine*. 5. 'If 'twas a faulding jocteleg,'
ms. (B). 6. 'Or lang-kail gullie':—A large knife used for
cutting the stalks of the colewort.

ON THE
LATE
CAPTAIN
GROSE

STANZA X. LINE I. 'Now, by the Powers of verse and
prose,' ms. (A).

TO MISS CRUICKSHANK

MISS JANE CRUICKSHANK, to whom those lines were
addressed, was the daughter of the poet's friend, Mr.
William Cruickshank, of the High School, Edinburgh,
and was then about twelve or thirteen years old. In
June 1804 she married James Henderson, writer, of
Jedburgh. She also inspired *A Rosebud by my Early
Walk*. The present piece appears to have been written
under the inspiration of 'Namby-Pamby' Phillips (*d.*
1749).

There are mss. in the possession of Mr. G. Seton
Veitch, of Paisley, Mr. Alfred Morrison, London, and
Mr. Fraser-Tytler, Aldourie Castle. It is inscribed in
the *Glenriddell Book*.

LINE 2. 'Blooming on *the early day*,' mss.

ANNA

SCOTT DOUGLAS, on plausible evidence, conjectured that
this song referred to a sweetheart of Alexander Cunning-
ham, and that it was a 'vicarious effusion.' His con-
jecture can now be fully substantiated. In an unpub-
lished part of a letter to Cunningham, 4th May 1789,
Burns wrote:—'The publisher of *The Star* has been
polite. He may find his account for it, though I would
scorn to put my name to a newspaper poem—one
instance, indeed, excepted. I mean your two stanzas.
Had the lady kept her character she should have kept
my verses; but as she has prostituted the one [by marry-
ing in January 1789], and no longer made anything
of the other; so sent them to Stuart as a bribe in

ANNA my earnestness to be cleared from the foul aspersions respecting the D—— of G——' [Duchess of Gordon]. The piece appeared in *Stuart's Star*, 18th April 1789. Burns also enclosed a copy to Mrs. Dunlop:—'The following is a *jeu d'esprit* of t' other day on a despairing lover leading me to see his Dulcinea.' It is inscribed in the *Glenriddell Book*, and an ms. is in the possession of Mr. Fraser-Tyler. It is found in Johnson's *Museum*, vi. 547 (1803), and in Thomson's *Scottish Airs*, v. 218: in the latter with the substitution of 'Sweet Anne' for 'Anna.'

STANZA I. LINE 2. 'And *press* my soul with care,' Lochryan MS.

ON READING IN A NEWSPAPER THE DEATH OF JOHN M'LEOD

BURNS made the acquaintance of Miss Isabella M'Leod during his first visit to Edinburgh. Her brother, John M'Leod of Raasay—the representative of the main Lewis branch of the clan—died 20th July 1787. In reference to other misfortunes of the family Burns wrote his *Raving Winds around her Blowing*. In a ms. note, 'This poetic compliment,' he says, 'what few poetic compliments are, was from the heart.'

There is a copy at Lochryan—ms. (A); a second—ms. (B)—is in the possession of Mr. T. G. Arthur, Ayr; and a facsimile has been published of a third—ms. (C)—formerly in the possession of Mr. Charles Griffin. The poem is inscribed in the *Glenriddell Book*—ms. (E)—and in another volume—ms. (D)—for access to which we have to thank Mr. Brown, Princes Street, Edinburgh. Another ms.—(ms. F)—is in the possession of Mr. Fraser-Tyler, Aldourie Castle, Inverness-shire. It corresponds exactly with the printed version.

STANZA IV. LINE 1. '*Heaven* oft tears the bosom cherds,'

mss. (A and C), and deleted reading in ms. (B) 4. 'And so ON THE
her heart was wrung,' mss. (B and D). DEATH OF

After STANZA IV. the following stanza occurs in ms. (B) :— JOHN

'Were it in the Poet's power,
Strong as he shares the grief
That pierces Isabella's heart,
To give that heart relief.'

M'LEOD.

STANZA V. LINE 3. 'Can point those *tearful, griefsworn*
eyes,' ms. (A) and deleted reading in ms. (D) ; *griefsworn brim-*
ful, mss. (B, C, D, and E) :—There is seemingly no authority,
written or printed, for the reading '*brimful, care-worn*,' of
Scott Douglas, and other editors.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER

BURNS spent two days with the family of the Duke of
Atholl during his northern tour in August 1787 ; and
in the *Glenriddell Book*, in which the *Humble Petition* is
inscribed, he wrote :—'God, who knows all things, knows
how my heart aches with the throes of gratitude, when-
ever I recollect my reception at the noble house of Atholl.'
In a letter to Professor Josiah Walker, enclosing the
poem, he stated that 'it was, at least the most part of it,
the effusion of a half hour' at Bruar. But, he adds, 'I
do not mean it was extempore, for I have endeavoured to
brush it up as well as Mr. Nicoll's chat and the jogging
of the chaise would allow.' It is inserted in the *Glenriddell*
Book—ms. (B)—and in the book—ms. (A)—referred to
in the introduction to the preceding piece. It was first
printed [anonymously] in *The Edinburgh Magazine* for
November 1789.

STANZA I. LINE 5. 'How saucy *Phebus*' scorching beams,'
1793. 8. 'And drink my crystal tide':—'Bruar falls are the
finest in the country, but not a bush about them, which spoils
much their beauty' (R. B. in ms. [A]) ; 'Bruar Falls in Atholl
are exceedingly picturesque and beautiful ; but their effect is

THE much impaired by the want of trees and shrubs' (R. B. in
HUMBLE Editions '93 and '94).
PETITION STANZA II. LINE 3. 'If in their *wanton random* spouts,'
OF BRUAR *Edinburgh Magazine*; 'I'm scorching up *sae* shallow,' MS.
WATER (B) and *Edinburgh Magazine*.

STANZA III. LINE 2. 'When Poet Burns came by,' MS. (A);
 'Poet B——,' *Edinburgh Magazine*.

STANZA IV. LINE 1. 'Here foaming down the *shelvy* rocks,'
 MSS. (A and B).

STANZA VI. LINE 3. 'The *Bardie*, Music's *youngest* child,'
 MSS. (A and B) and *Edinburgh Magazine*. 8. 'With all her
 locks of yellow,' MS. (A).

STANZA VII. LINES 3-4 in MS. (A) and *Edinburgh Magazine*
 read thus:—

'And coward *maukins* sleep secure,
 Low in *their* grassy *forms*.'

STANZA IX. LINE 1. 'And haply *here* at vernal dawn,' *Edinburgh Magazine*.

ON SCARING SOME WATER-FOWL IN LOCH TURIT

Thus presented in the *Glenriddell Book*—MS. (B):—
 'This was the production of a solitary forenoon's walk
 from Oughtertyre House. I lived there, the guest of
 Sir William Murray, for two or three weeks [October
 1787], and was much flattered by my hospitable recep-
 tion. What a pity that the mere emotions of gratitude
 are so impotent in this world! 'Tis lucky that, as we
 are told, they will be of some avail in the world to come.'
 A copy sent to Mrs. Dunlop is at Lochryan—MS. (A).

LINE 2. 'For me your *watry* haunt forsake,' 1793. 12. 'Ride
 the surging billows shock,' MS. (A). 13-14 in MS. (A) read
 thus:—

'Conscious blushing *for my kind*,
 Soon, too soon, your fears *I find*.'

19. 'The eagle from *his* cliffy brow,' MSS. (A and B). 39. 'And
that foe you cannot brave,' MSS. (A and B).

VERSES WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL AT TAYMOUTH

BURNS visited Taymouth on 29th August 1787. The piece is inscribed in the *Glenriddell Book* in the hand of an amanuensis, with the following note by Burns:— 'I wrote this with a pencil over the chimneypiece in the parlour of the inn at Kenmore, at the outlet of Loch Tay.' Above the signature, 'R. B., August 29th, 1787,' it appeared in *The Courant* of September 6th, 1787, almost as printed in Editions '93 and '94. Slightly differing versions appeared in *The Edinburgh Magazine* for September 1788, and in *The Bee* for 28th March 1792, the latter as 'Verses Written on a Window in Breadalbane by Mr. Robert Burns, May 9th, 1790.' In Edition '94—or at least in some copies—the pages were transposed by the printer.

LINE 6. 'Till fam'd Breadalbine opens *on* my view,' MS., *Courant* and *Bee*. 7. 'The meeting *hills* each deep sunk glen divides,' *Edinburgh Magazine*; 'A rifted hill,' *Bee*. 8. 'The woods, wild scattered, clothe their *towering* sides,' MS.:—'*Ample*,' as in Editions '93 and '94, is the more accurate expression. 10. 'The eye with *pleasure* and amazement fills,' *Edinburgh Magazine* and *Bee*. 14-18. In *The Edinburgh Magazine* and *The Bee* a transposition occurs in the case of these lines, and they read thus:—

'The *striding* arches o'er the new-born stream,
The village glittering in the noontide beam,
The lawns wood-fringed in Nature's native taste,
Nor with a single Goth-conceit disgraced.'

On the whole, the version in these periodicals is an improvement on that in the Author's Editions.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL STANDING BY THE FALL OF FYERS

BURNS visited the Fall in Foyers on 5th September 1787. In a note in the *Glenriddell Book*, where the poem is

WRITTEN inscribed by an amanuensis, 'I composed these lines,' he
 BY THE wrote, 'standing on the brink of the hideous cauldron
 FALL OF below the waterfall.'

FYERS LINE 10. 'The hoary cavern, wide surrounding *towers*,' MS.

ON THE BIRTH OF A POSTHUMOUS CHILD

In the *Glenriddell Book*—where the poem is inscribed—Burns explains that it is 'on the birth of Mons. Henri, posthumous child to a Mons. Henri, a gentleman of family and fortune from Switzerland; who died in three days' illness, leaving his lady, a sister of Sir Thomas Wallace, in her sixth month of this her first child. The lady and her family were particular friends of the author [she was a daughter of Mrs. Dunlop]. The child was born in November '90.' On receiving the news of the birth Burns wrote to Mrs. Dunlop:—'How could such a mercurial creature as a poet lumpishly keep his seat on receipt of the best news from his best friend? I seized my gilt-headed Wangee rod—an instrument indispensably necessary—in my left hand, in the moment of inspiration and rapture; and stride, stride—quick and quicker—out skipt I among the broomy banks of Nith to muse over my joy by retail. To keep within the bounds of prose was impossible . . . I, almost extempore, poured out to him in the following verses.' The stanzas appeared in *The Scots Magazine* for December 1793: in all probability they were reprinted from the published volume.

STANZA V. LINE 2. 'Fair on the *summer's* morn,' MS.

THE WHISTLE

Thus prefaced by Burns:—'As the authentic *Prose* history of the Whistle is curious, I shall here give it.—In the train of Anne of Denmark, when she came to Scotland with our

THE
WHISTLE

James the Sixth, there came over also a Danish gentleman of gigantic stature and great prowess, and a matchless champion of Bacchus. He had a little ebony Whistle, which, at the commencement of the orgies, he laid on the table; and whoever was last able to blow it, everybody else being disabled by the potency of the bottle, was to carry off the Whistle, as a trophy of victory.—The Dane produced credentials of his victories, without a single defeat, at the courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, Moscow, Warsaw, and several of the petty courts in Germany; and challenged the Scots Bacchanalians to the alternative of trying his prowess, or else of acknowledging their inferiority. After many overthrows on the part of the Scots, the Dane was encountered by Sir Robert Lowrie of Maxwelton, ancestor to the present worthy baronet of that name; who, after three days and three nights' hard contest, left the Scandinavian under the table, "And blew on the Whistle his requiem shrill."

'Sir Walter, son to Sir Robert before mentioned, afterwards lost the Whistle to Walter Riddell of Glenriddell, who had married a sister of Sir Walter's. On Friday, the 16th October 1790, at Friars-Carse, the Whistle was once more contended for, as related in the Ballad, by the present Sir Robert Lowrie of Maxwelton; Robert Riddell, Esq. of Glenriddell, lineal descendant and representative of Walter Riddell, who won the Whistle, and in whose family it had continued; and Alexander Ferguson, Esq. of Craigdarroch, likewise descended of the great Sir Robert, which last gentleman carried off the hard-won honours of the field.'

In this Prefatory Note Burns misdates the contest by a year, as is proved by (1) the date of a letter—16th October 1789—to Captain Riddell, in which he refers to the contest of the evening; and (2) by the memorandum of the 'Bett,' now in the possession of Sir Robert Jardine of Castlemilk, first published in *Notes and Queries*, Second Series, vol. x. (1860), p. 423:—

DOQUET

THE 'The original Bett between Sir Robert Laurie and Craigdarroch,
WHISTLE for the noted Whistle, which is so much celebrated by Robert
Burns' Poems—in which Bett I was named Judge—1789.
The Bett decided at Carse—16th October 1789.
Won by Craigdarroch—he drank upda. of 5 Bottles of Claret.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE WHISTLE

The Whistle gained by Sir Robert Laurie (now) in possession of
Mr. Riddell of Glenriddell, is to be ascertained to the heirs of the
said Sir Robert now existing, being Sir R. L., Mr. R. of G., and
Mr. F. of C.—to be settled under the arbitration of Mr. Jn.
M'Murdo: the business to be decided at Carse, the 16th of
October 1789.

(Signed) ALEX. FERGUSON.
R. LAURIE.
ROBT. RIDDELL.

COWHILL, 10th October 1789.

John M'Murdo accepts as Judge.
Geo. Johnston witness, to be present.
Patrick Miller witness, to be pre. if possible.

Minute of Bett between Sir Robert Laurie and Craigdarroch,
1789.'

The question, whether or not Burns was present, has
been hotly debated. The references in his letter on the
day of the fight, as well as the terms of the 'Bett,' seem
to show that, tradition notwithstanding, he was not. But
there are no data for an absolute conclusion. For the
stanza, see *ante*, p. 417, Prefatory Note to *No Churchman
Am I*.

MSS. are numerous. The first rough sketch, embracing
the four opening stanzas only, is in the Watson Collection.
The ms. in the Crichton Institution, Dumfries, is said to
be the commemorative copy sent to Friars Carse. The
beautiful copy sent to the winner of the contest ['a
small but sincere mark of the highest respect and esteem
from the Author'] is in the possession of the Earl of

Rosebery. For the inspection of a fine copy on Excise paper, our acknowledgments are due to Mr. James Richardson, of Messrs. Kerr and Richardson, Queen Street, Glasgow. It includes the presentation stanza :—

' But one sorry quill, and that worn to the core,
No paper—but such as I show it ;
But such as it is, will the good Laird of Tor
Accept, and excuse the poor Poet.'

There are also mss. in the Dumfries Observatory, the museum at Thornhill, and the British Museum ; and the ballad is inscribed in the *Glenriddell Book*. It was published in *The Edinburgh Magazine* for November 1791, on the 5th of the month in *The Edinburgh Evening Courant*, and on the 6th in *The Edinburgh Herald* ; but both these prints were anticipated by *The London Star*, which gave it on the 2nd—' fresh from his fertile pen.' In the *Courant* and the *Star* it is stated that the contest took place, ' it appears, in the presence of Mr. Burns.' *The Whistle* was also printed, soon afterwards, in a chapbook, and before its publication in Edition '93 it appeared in Johnson's *Museum*, iv. 324 (1792), set to music by Captain Riddell, with the chorus :—*Fal de lal lal ly*.

The text is chiefly taken from Editions '93 and '94, and the variations from it in the mss. and in other printed versions are given below.

STANZA II. LINE 1. ' Old Loda, still rueing the arm of Fingal ' :—' See Ossian's *Caric-thura* ' (R. B.) 3-4 in the first draft read thus :—

' This Whistle's your challenge—*blow till the last breath,*
And since we can't fight them, Let's drink them to death.'

STANZA IV. LINE 3. ' *Had* drank his poor godship as deep as the sea.'

STANZA VI. LINE 3. ' And trusty Glenriddell, so *versed* in old coins ' :—See Prefatory Note to *Impromptu to Captain Riddell*, vol. ii.

THE STANZA VIII. LINE 3. 'I'll conjure the ghost of the great
WHISTLE Rorie More : '—' See Johnson's *Tour in the Hebrides* (R. B.).
4. 'And bumper his horn with him twenty times more.'

STANZA IX. LINE 1. 'Sir Robert, a soldier, no speech *could*
pretend.' 4. 'And knee-deep in claret he'd die *or* he'd yield,'
1793 and 1794.

STANZA X. LINE 2. 'So noted for drowning *both* sorrow
and care.'

STANZA XI. LINE 3. 'A Bard who detested all *sorrow* and
spleen.'

STANZA XII. LINE 3. 'In the bands of old friendship and
kindred *well* set.'

STANZA XIII. LINE 1. 'Gay pleasure ran riot *till* bumpers
ran o'er.' 4. 'Till Cynthia hinted he'd *find* them next morn.'

STANZA XIV. LINE 3. 'Turned o'er *at* one bumper a bottle
of red.' 4. 'And swore 'twas the way that their *ancestors* did.'

STANZA XVIII. LINE 1. 'Thy fine, that *has* struggled for
freedom with Bruce.' 3. 'So thine be the *laurels*, and mine be
the bay.'

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